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ANCIENT RELIGION

AND

MODERN THOUGHT.

111445

BY

WILLIAM SAMUEL LILLY

Ist nicht der Kern der Natur
Menschen im Herzen?

GOETHE.

C. C. 35

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1884.

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PREFACE.

THE subject of this book is, I think, sufficiently indicated by its title. But it may be well that I should here briefly set down the main outlines of my argument, since, for a reason which I shall presently give, I have preferred not to present it in the form of a systematic treatise.

First, then, I ask my readers to look in the face the issue of that great intellectual movement in the European world which is usually termed Modern Thought: a vague term, indeed, although, I suppose, we all know well enough what is meant by it. An essentially negative movement it is—its ultimate message to mankind the philosophy of Schopenhauer and his school: and to an examination of that philosophy my First Chapter is devoted. But the view of life put before us by the Pessimists is, after all, to a large

extent true, nor is it easy to see what answer can be given to their argument save that supplied by religious faith. Is religious faith, then, any longer possible? or has Modern Thought been so fatal to it as is commonly asserted?

I proceed in my Second Chapter to consider how that question has been answered, for himself, by a thinker, for sixty years contemporary with Schopenhauer, and certainly not inferior to the prophet of Pessimism in keenness, subtilty, or breadth, of intellect, while far superior to him in those ethical qualities which are no less necessary than intellectual, to the seeker after truth in any department higher than that of physical science. As the founder of a religious movement, the philosophical basis of which was indirectly derived from Kant,[1] John Henry Newman's spiritual history is peculiarly worthy of attention in view of the great question which Modern Thought so imperiously raises. To that history, and to the phase of religion which is so inseparably con-

[1] See pp. 59-61.

nected with it, and which is best studied in the person and action of its originator and leader, I have given my Second Chapter. Cardinal Newman, like Schopenhauer, has looked in the face "the heart-piercing, reason-bewildering" mystery of life: the result being to bring him, not to Atheistic Nihilism, but to the acceptance of the most dogmatic form of Christianity. Using informal inference as his method, and following conscience as the great internal teacher of religious truth, he finds himself able to believe in God, and in a God who has revealed Himself *in facie Jesu Christi*, and to submit to the claim of that Ancient Religion, which, as the Spiritual Kingdom set up by Christ, requires the allegiance of mankind.

But Jesus Christ came into the world late in its history. And His is but one form of Ancient Religion. What of the others? In my Third Chapter I answer that question. First I pass in review the great non-Christian systems of the world, and then I indicate their position in respect of Christianity.

And now I come to the root of the matter—the question of supersensible existence. After all, have we sufficient warrant for asserting the being of God and the soul? In my Fourth Chapter I examine the arguments for and against belief in Deity, and especially that form of it which is of most practical importance, the form in which it is presented by Christianity, and, to be precise, by the very version of Christianity to which Modern Thought is supposed to be most fatal: the creed of the Catholic Church. In the Fifth Chapter I deal with the subject of immortality, and inquire whether the existence of an immaterial principle within ourselves, surviving the death of the body, is, as a brilliant and popular writer assures us, "a vapid figment," or whether all science, and not merely physical, does not testify, if rightly interrogated, to the incorporeal nature, the independent action, the distinct personality, and the indestructibleness of the soul.

Such, in brief outline, is the scope of this volume. The five chapters of which it consists have already, to some extent, been given to the world: the first in the *Nineteenth Century*, the second and fifth in the *Fortnightly Review*, the fourth in the *Contemporary Review*, where, too, a part of the third chapter has appeared, another portion of it having been published in the *Dublin Review*. My thanks are due to the Editors of those journals for their kind permission to use for my present purpose these contributions to their pages. But this book is not a mere reprint. It contains a considerable amount of new matter, while the old has been carefully revised, and, more or less, rewritten, to fit it for its present place. I have, however, retained the separate form originally given to the several studies now brought together, and herein, I believe, I have consulted the convenience of my readers. Each chapter deals with a special subject, and is, in a sense, complete in itself, while again, each has its proper position in the book as part of an organic whole, for, as I have explained, one argument runs through it. Each chapter, I

may add, might easily have been expanded into a volume. But in writing for the general reader it is necessary to write short. My design has been rather to indicate lines of thought than to follow them out: and I have sought to view things, as far as possible, in the concrete. An admirable critic has well said of the greatest master of romantic fiction, "Il a saisi la verité parcequ'il a saisi les ensembles." It is the only way of grasping higher truth in any department of human thought, and I have endeavoured to follow it in this work. That must be my excuse, if excuse be wanted, for the vast extent of the ground over which I have travelled.

There are yet a few words which I must say, and for which this seems to be the proper place, to obviate misconceptions that I should much regret. First let me enter a *caveat* against the supposition that I commit myself irrevocably to the scientific hypotheses of Damon in the Fifth Chapter, where much that he says is by way of *argumentum ad hominem*, much more by way of

suggestion, for the purpose of eliciting the thought of others, and of gaining further light. Again, it must be remembered that in his attempt to harmonize his view of life and death with the doctrine of progressive evolution, Damon employs, not the precise terminology of the schools, but the vaguer language of modern speculative thought. When he says "there is only one substance," what he means is, "spirit alone is substance, and matter is a manifestation of spirit"; when he says "God will know Himself," he uses the future not as indicating change in the Unchangeable, but in view of that "far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves," and he does not in the least forget that God is the Eternal Now:[1] when he speaks of the illusoriness of matter as distinct from spirit, he does little else than echo, or translate into the speech of our own day, the teaching of the Angelic Doctor, that matter, *materia prima*, is not a substance, cannot exist by itself, is *pæne nihil*, and is susceptible of endless transforma-

[1] See page 233.

tions, all of which are due to higher and immaterial energies. His argument must not be judged of by isolated phrases; it must be viewed as a whole—its main steps are indicated in the summary of the Fifth Chapter—and I am very confident that, if so viewed, it will be found to supply the true answer to that capital error which identifies God with the world, by recognising and applying to the proper use the element of truth latent and distorted therein: the truth taught by Plato to the men of Athens, *πάντα πλήρη θεῶν, πλήρη ψυχῆς*, and recalled to them by St. Paul in his sermon on Areopagus: *In ipso vivimus et movemur et sumus.* Damon takes the problem as the materialists state it, but proposes for it an entirely different solution. While they explain everything by ultimate matter, he explains everything by ultimate spirit. For them superior forms are only combinations of inferior. For him inferior forms are but manifestations of superior. In his hypothesis, as in theirs, Nature is a scale of graduated forms passing from one to another by a continued progress. But for them this progress

is only a complication of fortuitous changes: for him it is the operation of a Divine Law governing "the ascension of the *Ego*," "the metamorphosis by which the *Ego* comes to know itself." "Certains esprits timorés pourraient reprocher aux vues précédentes de côtoyer de très près le panthéisme, de si près même que parfois on croit y être; mais nous sommes d'avis de ne pas abuser de ce spectre du panthéisme, qui finit par paralyser toute philosophie. A force de ne voir plus que des trappes autour de soi, on n'ose plus ni parler, ni penser, ni bouger. Exprimez-vous sincèrement quelques doutes, comme le faisait Socrate, vous êtes un sceptique. Accordez-vous quelque chose aux sciences de la matière, vous êtes un matérialiste. Essayez-vous de concilier le déterminisme et la liberté, vous êtes un fataliste. Voyez-vous Dieu en toutes choses, vous êtes un panthéiste. En vérité, cette perpétuelle évocation des mauvaises doctrines est quelque chose d'irritant, et finirait presque par vous en donner le goût, comme en politique on deviendrait révolutionnaire à force d'entendre perpétuellement dénoncer par un fanatisme absurde la

révolution." This warning of a vigorous French thinker is worthy of being deeply pondered. For the rest, we may insist upon the solid and profound distinction drawn by Krause between Pantheism and what he call Panentheism. It is one thing to say that the All is God (ἕν καὶ πᾶν), it is quite another to say that all is in God (πᾶν ἐν Θεῷ). Perhaps the great work which lies before Christian philosophy at the present day is to enforce and to develope this distinction. St. Athanasius would not have adopted the "Omnia, diversis tamen gradibus, animata sunt" of Spinosa. But, most assuredly, he would have granted the existence of a spiritual element in all things, animate as well as inanimate. He would even say that the law which shows itself in the inorganic world finds its perfection — among created things—in man as λογικός, whereby he reflects, in varying degrees of perfection, the Divine ΛΌΓΟΣ. Compare St. Athanasius with Heraclitus and you will discover the true limit of the doctrine of progressive evolution: the key to the enigma with which we find the late Professor Green struggling, when he talks about,

not the Absolute, but the "eternal consciousness" passing from potentiality into act, until in man it recognises itself. Mr. Herbert Spencer would make short work with this "eternal consciousness." So, in a different way, would Hegel, whom, I suspect, Mr. Spencer has never read, although he does but say, in the language of physical science, what the Teutonic thinker had said in the language of metaphysics. Both would pronounce it a survival of a theological belief, hardly disguised in philosophical terms: both would maintain that an eternal consciousness is an impossibility unless there is something else eternal from which it is distinguished. Well, whatever the criticism may be worth—a question too large to be considered here—this is certain, that the Catholic doctrine is untouched thereby, since in its forefront it carries the recognition of God, not as a Unit without differentiation, but as a Unity including eternal distinctions in Itself. The Trinity is not only the most august, but the most fruitful of mysteries, bearing as It does, in numberless ways, upon the profoundest problems of metaphysics: a truth which should never be

lost sight of in any attempt to harmonize, as far as may be, the old and new philosophies. "Illa est igitur plena satietas animorum, hæc est beata vita, pie perfecteque cognoscere a quo inducaris in veritatem, qua veritate perfruaris, per quid connectaris summo modo. Quæ tria unum Deum intelligentibus unamque substantiam, exclusis vanitatibus variæ superstitionis, ostendunt".

W. S. L.

London, April 7th, 1884.

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There is but one real substance, the soul: matter as distinct from spirit is an abstraction, and if taken to be real an illusion; and evolution, or the history of the world, is only the continued metamorphosis by which the *Ego* comes to know itself . . 342

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ANCIENT RELIGION AND MODERN THOUGHT.

CHAPTER I.

THE MESSAGE OF MODERN THOUGHT.

GEORGE SAND, in her *History of my Life*, tells us how during the solitude of her early womanhood at Nohant she had yielded to the taste of the century, which was to shut oneself up in an egoistic sorrow, to imagine oneself René or Obermann, and to attribute to oneself an exceptional sensibility, by reason of sufferings unknown to the vulgar herd. When she was thirty her horizon enlarged. She came to Paris, the blissful Promised Land of her waking dreams, to live that artist life in which she had hoped, above all things, to find peace with herself. Her illusion was soon dispelled. It was then that she was brought, for the first time, face to face with the darker problems of existence, and saw the world as it is. And in the view of its great objective evil, she tells us, her merely subjective sorrow was merged, as a rivulet lost in ocean.

One quickly tires (she writes) of contemplating oneself. We are such limited beings, so soon exhausted, the little romance of each is so quickly gone over in one's memory! Except one really believes oneself sublime, how can self-examination, self-contemplation, occupy us long? But who is there that, in real good faith, thinks himself sublime? The poor lunatic who takes himself for the sun, and who, from his sad domicile, calls out to the passer-by to have a care of the brilliancy of his rays. When the sadness, the want, the hopelessness, the vice, of which human society is full, rose up before me, when my reflections were no longer bent upon my proper destiny, but upon that of the world, of which I was but an atom, my personal despair extended itself to all creation, and the law of fatality arose before me in such appalling aspect that my reason was shaken by it. There is no pride, no egotism, which will console us when we are absorbed in that idea. . . . The general evil poisons the individual good.[1]

The strange and fascinating book from which these extracts are taken must of course be read with a judicious reserve and a limited scepticism. Let us not, however, make it a reproach to George Sand if she has idealised a little in her self-delineation. Who is there that could bear to be drawn in the hard lines of a pitiless realism? Some fig-leaf of the ideal has been indispensable to us since the day, now grown so dim and very far off, when the eyes of the "snow-limbed Eve" and her too complaisant partner "were opened, and they knew that they were naked." It is the office of language, as of raiment, both to express us and to conceal us. And there can be no question that the portrait given to us in the *History of my Life* does, to a

[1] *Histoire de Ma Vie*, 5me partie, c. 2.

very great extent, really express its author. It lives not more by its artistic merit than by the truth that is in it.

George Sand's intellectual history, as she has observed in an earlier portion of her Autobiography, is, to a certain extent, the intellectual history of her age. The century opens with a passionate cry from a band of poets who sing, to divers tones, the same sad song of disenchantment, life-weariness, despair. It was Lord Byron who, as their Choregus,

> bore,
> With haughty scorn which mock'd the smart,
> Through Europe to the Ætolian shore,
> The pageant of his bleeding heart.

In Italy, Leopardi's deeper note had for its theme "the unblessed and terrible secret of life"—

> Nostra vita a che val? solo a spregiarla.

Heine, "bitter and strange," is aptly termed by his countrymen "the singer of the world-pain." Alfred de Musset's burden is ever—

> que le bonheur sur terre
> Peut n'avoir qu'une nuit, comme la gloire un jour.

Even Wordsworth, in the "sweet calm" which he had made for himself among his hills and streams—

> Mourns less for what life takes away
> Than what it leaves behind.

While the eupeptic cheerfulness of Scott is darkened by the shadow of what Schelling finely calls "that sadness which cleaves to all finite life," as the day

dying on "the broad lake and mountain side" suggests the unanswerable reflection—

> thus pleasures fade away,
> Youth, talent, beauty, thus decay,
> And leave us dark, forlorn, and grey.

And it will be found, for that is my present point, that, as the century advances, this pessimistic vein in the literature of Europe becomes more objective; that the general thought travels the same melancholy road as George Sand's particular thought, from the single to the universal, from the person to the race. But more than this, "years that bring the philosophic mind" lead not only individual men, but the collection or rather flock of individual men which we call an age, from sentiments to systems, which, after all, are only sentiments formulated. Man is a metaphysical animal, whatever else he may or may not be. No gay Voltairean banter, bidding him concentrate his energies on the cultivation of his garden, will ever tie him down to the seen and actual; no fork of positivism will expel his innate tendency to look behind phenomena and to pry into the great darkness which encompasses human life. The earlier generations of the nineteenth century gazed, appalled, at

> the vision of the woe
> In which mankind is bound.

Our own generation seeks men of excellent spirit

and knowledge and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and showing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, to show the interpretation of the vision, and turns to Germany for the new Daniel of whose soothsaying it has need. We have passed from Shelley to Schopenhauer, from *The Revolt of Islam* to *The World as Will and Idea.* I propose to consider the explanation of the enigma of life which is offered us by the great prophet of pessimism, and the later writer upon whom has fallen his mantle, if not a double portion of his spirit. The new pessimistic philosophy is a fact, and a very significant fact, in the world's history. I shall endeavour, in the first place, to give in as plain and untechnical language as is possible some account of its main outlines, and then to estimate its significance, as a fact, in the annals of our time.

Although it is only of late years that Schopenhauer has acquired his high position among "the kings of modern thought," he belongs chronologically to the earlier part of the century. Born in 1788 and dying in 1860, he lived through the age whose sentiment he was to translate into philosophy, but it was so long ago as 1819 that he published his principal work, on *The World as Will and Idea.* For forty years, however, this treatise was buried in obscurity. It was not until 1851 that his

countrymen were aroused by the publication of his *Parerga und Paralipomena* to a dim perception that the Prophet of a new Gospel had arisen among them; and I believe I am well warranted in saying that it was an English man of letters, Mr. Oxenford, who, writing in the Westminster Review in 1853, first displayed a clear appreciation of his true rank in the province of speculative thought. From that date until the present day Schopenhauer's teaching has attracted ever-increasing attention, and the pessimistic school of which he is the founder and chief doctor now occupies a very prominent position in Germany. Von Hartmann, the most considerable member of it, claims, indeed, to rank as an independent thinker, and maintains that the doctrine set forth in the two ponderous volumes wherein he unfolds his *Philosophy of the Unconscious* is connected with Schopenhauer's teaching only by very slight ties. It seems to me that the claim is ill-founded, that the variations of Von Hartmann from the earlier teacher are superficial and unessential, and that the message which the two deliver to the world is manifestly in the main the same. And the world has given heed to it. The *Philosophy of the Unconscious* has gone through seven editions and is now stereotyped and commands a large sale, while Schopenhauer's own works, collected and carefully edited by Frauenstädt, occupy a secure place among the classics of his country. In England the new philosophy has been discussed in Mr. James

Sully's *Pessimism*, a thoughtful work, not undervalued by many who, like myself, differ widely from its conclusions. In France M. Ribot and M. Caro have made it the subject of carefully written and eminently readable books, and M. Challemel-Lacour has contributed to the *Revue des Deux Mondes* an extremely interesting sketch both of the philosopher and his system in a paper entitled *Un Bouddhiste Contemporain.*

M. Challemel-Lacour has done wisely, I think, in prefacing his account of Schopenhauer's speculations by an account of Schopenhauer himself, and I shall follow his example. No kind of ratiocination, indeed, is more vicious than that which seeks to draw conclusions as to the soundness or unsoundness of any philosophical or religious system from the merits or demerits of particular persons who happen to profess it. But the founders of religions and philosophies are in a very different position in this respect. Their teaching is but one expression of themselves—a reflection of their own individuality, or, as Aristotle speaks, an external embodiment of their inner being,[1] and is best judged of, when that is possible, in connection with other manifestations of their personality. Their lives often throw a flood of light upon their doctrines. Let us therefore consider briefly what manner of man Arthur Schopenhauer was. His life may be read at large in the pages of Gwinner,

[1] ἐνεργεία δή ὁ ποίησας τὸ ἔργον ἐστί πως.—*Eth.* l. ix. c. 7

Frauenstädt, and Lindner, and in the instructive little English work which Miss Zimmern has compiled from these and other sources. As to its external incidents, it is soon told. The son of a wealthy and well-educated merchant of Danzig, for whom he claimed Dutch descent, and of a clever and vivacious woman, he lost his father at the age of eighteen. Soon after, he abandoned the commercial career upon which he had entered, and, after passing a short time at Gotha, betook himself to Weimar, where his mother was residing. She however stipulated that he should not live with her. "Your way of living and of regarding life, your grumbling at the inevitable, your sulky looks, your eccentric opinions, which you deliver oracularly and without appeal—all this disquiets, fatigues, and saddens me. Your mania for disputation, your lamentations over the folly of the world and the misery of mankind, prevent my sleeping and give me bad dreams." On attaining the age of twenty he entered at the University of Göttingen, where, besides the humane letters, he studied chemistry, medicine, natural history, and the religions and philosophies of the East. In 1811 he quitted the University of Göttingen for that of Berlin. Thence he went to Dresden, and in 1818 he paid his first visit to Italy. In 1820 he returned to Berlin, and began to lecture as a *Privat-docent*, but attracted no audience. In 1823 he went to Italy again, and again came back to Berlin, in 1825, and remained

there until 1830, when he fled at the approach of cholera, and took up his abode in Frankfort, attracted thither by its reputation for salubrity. It was in that city that he finally fixed his residence. He never left it from 1833 until his death.

Such are the principal landmarks in his lonely, self-engrossed career. His life, through all that tract of years, was led in a routine of study, *table d'hôte*, flute-playing, walking, and sleeping. He never married, and appears to have declined, as far as possible, all the ordinary duties of life. His chief amusements were the theatre and music, and the contemplation of works of plastic and pictorial art. The picture which Miss Zimmern, a professed admirer of him, gives of his manners, is not winning. She attributes to him "boisterous arrogance"[1] and "vanity in the worst sense of the word."[2] "Neglect exasperated him, he was easily angered, suspicious and irritable."[3] "The heavy artillery of abusive utterance characterised his speech."[4] "Loss of fortune was of all ills most dreaded by him."[5] "The slightest noise at night made him start and seize the pistols that always lay ready loaded. He would never trust himself under the razor of a barber, and he fled from the mere mention of an infectious disease." He professed a great respect for the memory of his deceased father, but to his living mother he exhibited "a shocking want of

[1] *Life*, Pref. p. vii. [2] *Ibid.* p. 81. [3] *Ibid.* p. 89.
[4] *Ibid.* p. 28. [5] *Ibid.* p. 130.

filial piety." In politics he was a strenuous advocate of absolutism. Patriotism he judged "the most foolish of passions and the passion of fools." Like Voltaire, he held the people to be "a collection of bears and swine," and he regarded all pleadings for their liberty, freedom, and happiness as hollow twaddle.[1] Naturally, therefore, the great uprising of 1848 against the crowned oppressors of Germany was detested by him. How strong were his sympathies on the other side may be inferred from the fact that all his fortune was bequeathed to the survivors or representatives of the troops who carried out the murderous task of re-establishing the tottering edifice of Teutonic despotism. In the pleasures of the senses he indulged freely. Wine, indeed, soon mounted to his head. He was obliged therefore to content himself with shallow potations. But he was a great eater, and, as Miss Zimmern euphemistically expresses it, "he was very susceptible to female charms,"[2] with a preference, as that lady is obliging enough to note, for brown women. His landlady at Berlin, it may be assumed, either was not charming or was not brown, as he distinguished himself by kicking her downstairs with such violence as permanently to cripple her, and was in consequence condemned by the proper tribunal to maintain her for the rest of her natural life. He appears in practice to have approximated

[1] *Life*, p. 201 [2] *Ibid.* p. 70.

to the Byronic standard of the whole duty of man —Lord Byron, indeed, was one of his favourite poets—"to hate your neighbour, and to love your neighbour's wife." "The more I see of men," he writes, "the less I like them. If I could but say so of women, all would be well."[1] His constant aim, as he says in many places, was to acquire a clear view of the utter despicability of mankind, and it must be allowed that he supplied in his own person a strong argument in favour of that doctrine. The sole virtues, using the word in its most elastic sense, with which I find him credited, were love of his spaniel, and occasional doles to his poor relations, which, however, could have been no great tax upon his fortune, for at his death his patrimony, in spite of sundry bad investments, had nearly doubled.

And now let us turn from the man to his philosophy.

The first position of Schopenhauer's system is the ideality of the world. The external universe as it appears, as it presents itself to the senses, he holds to have no real existence, but to be merely a cerebral phenomenon. The visible forms of things which seem to us the necessary and absolute conditions of all real existence he considers inherent in

[1] *Life*, p. 130.

the human intellect. There is a passage in the *Memorabilien* in which he brings out this view with great clearness and force.

Two things were before me, two bodies, ponderable, regular in form, fair to behold. One was a vase of jasper with a rim and handles of gold; the other an organised body, a man. After having long admired their exterior, I begged the genius who accompanied me to let me look inside them. He consented, and in the vase I found nothing save the pression of the weight, and I know not what obscure reciprocal tendency between its parts which I have heard called cohesion and affinity. But, when I looked into the other object, what a surprise was then in store for me! How can I rehearse what I saw? No fairy tale, no fable, relates anything so incredible. Within it or rather in the upper part of it, called the head, which, viewed from without, seemed an object like the rest, circumscribed by dimensions, weight, &c., I found—what? The world itself, with the immensity of space in which the All is contained, and with the immensity of time in which the All moves, and with the prodigious variety of things which fill space and time; and, what sounds almost absurd, I saw myself there coming and going. Yes, all that I saw in that object, hardly as big as a large fruit, which the executioner can with one blow sweep off, plunging into darkness the whole world therein contained. And this world would have no existence if objects of this kind did not sprout up continually, like mushrooms, to receive the world ready to sink into nothingness, and bandy about among them, like a football, this great image, identical in all, and whose identity they express by the word "object."

Such is the starting-point of Schopenhauer's doctrine—that "the world of phenomena, known in sensuous perception, exists only for our percipient minds, and that its essential nature therefore is mental representation." It depends upon mental activity, and ceases to exist when the percipient

mind ceases. He next proceeds to inquire whether there is behind this phenomenal world a Reality, an Absolute Existence, an Ultimate Fact. He holds that there is, and that Reality, that Absolute Existence, that Ultimate Fact, he designates Will. Of this Will, which does not seem to be substantially different from what is usually termed Force, all phenomena are but manifestations. It is the "universal and fundamental essence" of all activities, both of the organic and the inorganic world, "the primordial thing whence we and everything proceed."[1] But this Will is not personal. Far from it. It is a blind power, pervading the universe, primarily unconscious, but attaining consciousness in the world of representation. "The innermost consciousness of every animal and of man lies in the species." It is the Will of the species that manifests itself both in actions which tend "to the conservation of the individual and in those which tend to prolong the life of the species." "The Will, which regarded purely in itself is unconscious and

[1] This is admirably put by Mr. Oxenford. "Gravitation, electricity, and, in fact, every form of action, from the fall of an apple to the foundation of a republic, is an expression of the Will, and nothing more. The world is essentially Will, and nothing more, developing itself in a series of manifestations, which rise in a graduated scale from the so-called laws of matter to that consciousness which in inferior animals reaches the state of sensibility and understanding (in Schopenhauer's sense), and in man reaches that higher state called Reason."—*Westminster Review*, New Series, vol. iii. p. 403.

only a blind irrestrainable impulse, as we see it manifested in organic and vegetable nature and its laws, and in the vegetative part of our own life, receives through the added world of representation, which is developed for its service, a knowledge of its own volition and of what it is that it wills: a knowledge, namely, that what it wills is nothing else than this world, life exactly as it stands."[1] In short, Will, according to the pessimistic doctors, manifests itself as the Will-to-live. "Life is that for which everything pants and labours," and sexual love,[2] with whatever trappings of poetry or sentiment it may be adorned, is merely a manifestation of this blind striving after the life of the species. This is a point which Schopenhauer regarded as "the pearl of his system," to quote his own expression, and he enlarges upon it much and forcibly, and with a wealth of humour reminding us now of Swift and now of Rabelais. His humour indeed, like that of those masters, is as broad as it is keen, and it must suffice here to quote his dictum, that "the growing passion of two lovers for one another is nothing else, properly speaking, but the Will-to-live already manifested, of the new being

[1] *Sämmtliche Werke*, vol. ii. p. 323.

[2] He writes: "The state of being in love, however ethereally the feeling may comport itself, is rooted solely in the sexual impulse; nay, it is throughout only a sexual impulse more closely determined, specialised, in the strictest sense individualised."—*Sämmtliche Werke*, vol. iii. p. 610.

which they are capable and desirous of begetting."[1] It is the Will of the generation to come, "striving to mix itself with life," and using for its purpose the most potent of human instincts, with an entire disregard of individual suffering. He considers women as the ministers of our weakness and our folly, and the foes of our reason: the instruments whereby the Will-to-live attains its maleficent ends and perpetuates the miserable existence of humanity. Hence, they are the objects of his deepest contempt and most withering satire.

Many important consequences flow from this theory of the Will. In the first place it is incompatible with anything which we commonly understand by the word God. Theism, Schopenhauer holds, is a tradition of the nursery: Pantheism, an invention of professors. Secondly, it is fatal to the personality of man. What men had called the soul, Ego, or first principle, he resolves into two factors, Will and Intellect, but of the latter he makes small account, regarding it merely as a cerebral phenomenon, dependent upon the organism, a function of the body. And the Will, which is "the innermost kernel of our nature," is not in truth individual: it

[1] M. Caro quotes the lines in which Ackerman has versified "with savage energy" this conception of Schopenhauer:—

Ces délires sacrés, ces désirs sans mesure,
Déchaînés dans vos flancs comme d'ardents essaims,
Ces transports, c'est déjà l'humanité future
Qui s'agite en vos seins.

is merely a manifestation of the one universal Will. Hence, with perfect consistency, he pronounces that "the study of psychology is vain, because there is no ψυχή; there is nothing but Will and phenomena." Thirdly, not less vain, according to Schopenhauer's theory, is any notion of free will in man. He is a strict necessarian. "Velle non discitur" is a text upon which he is fond of enlarging. Our character—our "intelligible" character, as he terms it to distinguish it from our "empirical" character—is born with us and is absolutely subject to the law of cause and effect which reigns in the phenomenal world. As logical necessity presides over the sequence of ideas, and physical necessity over the succession of phenomena, and geometrical necessity over the relations of space, so moral necessity rules in the actions and motives of men. Fourthly, his theory makes an end of conscience, which he thinks may be resolved into five elements—fear of man, superstition, prejudice, vanity, custom. And fifthly, it of course overthrows the old bases of moral obligation. Virtue, he teaches, consists in universal sympathy, grounded on the fact that the whole universe, sentient and non-sentient, is simply a manifestation of the one Will, and consequently is identical with ourselves. It is therefore merely a form of self-love, and to show kindness to any man or thing is to show kindness to that which we ourselves are. "Tears," he says in one place, "spring from self-pity."

So much may suffice to convey some conception, at all events in outline, of the second great doctrine of Schopenhauer's system—that the one reality is Will, manifesting itself in the phenomenal world as the Will-to-live. His third point is that this is not a rational desire, but a blind instinct, altogether foolish and irrational. He adopts in the fullest sense the proposition that

> This world is all a fleeting show,
> For man's illusion given;

we are the sport of that dark, mysterious power—that *puissance rusée* in M. Caro's phrase—Will, which is perpetually rushing into life, whether conscious or unconscious. He does not deduce his pessimism merely from the accidental sufferings of humanity, although of these he draws a very powerful and terrible picture. He takes "the high priori road," and maintains that existence is in itself, and essentially, an evil: because for every sentient being to live is to will, and to will, is to strive, and to strive is to suffer. Thus, "life, so far from being a state of enjoyment, is always and necessarily one of suffering, and the deepest cause of this suffering lies in the Will itself." "Our nature is a perpetual striving, and may be compared in every respect with an insatiable thirst." It is a "struggle for existence with the certainty of being vanquished." Nor is there any exception to this rule; it presses upon animals as upon men, and upon wise men as

upon the ignorant and foolish, but ever with the more terrible severity the higher we ascend in the scale of being. For increased intelligence merely means increased capacity for pain—the man of genius being more miserable than the fool, and the fool more miserable than the animal—while the only moments of life which deserve to be called happy, save those passed in the absolute unconsciousness of sleep, are such as are spent in the disinterested contemplation of works of art. Æsthetic enjoyment is the temporary deliverance from all which makes up the fatigues of life, its chain of vulgar realities and petty egotism. It lifts us, though but for a moment, above the infinite torrent of Will: the enfranchised cognition seizes on things without personal interest, and abandons itself to them as pure representation and not as motives. For an instant Ixion's wheel stops. There is the enfranchisment, on the one hand, of the contemplative subject, and, on the other, of the contemplative object, which is raised to the state of pure idea (in the Platonic sense) by being freed from the conditions of time, of space, and causality. We lift for a moment the veil of Mâya, for the idea stands between the thing-in-itself and the world of representation, and, in disinterested intuition of it, we are sprinkled, as it were, from the true river of Lethe, the stream of the Absolute and Eternal. As to the other so-called pleasures of life, both Schopenhauer and Von Hartmann regard

them as illusions, through which we become the sport of that Will-to-live which is the cause of all our sufferings. Schopenhauer adds to this that all pleasure is merely negative, as being nothing but a cessation of pain, while suffering alone is positive. Von Hartmann, who does not adopt this tenet, has devoted much attention to the construction of a balance of pleasures and pains, the result at which he arrives being that the latter far outweigh the former. Schopenhauer's conclusion is that the world is the worst possible world. Were it worse, he thinks it could have no existence at all. Von Hartmann considers that this statement requires qualification on the ground that we do not know what is possible. But he earnestly maintains that the world is so bad that it had far better not exist, and that it is steadily becoming worse. Both he and Schopenhauer agree that the notion of what is called progress, "the dream that man will become in some vague future wiser, gentler, better," is the master-delusion of the age, for "the advance of civilisation means but the enhanced capacity of the human race for suffering." Far other is the outlook on which the pessimistic doctors delight to dwell. They profess a sure and certain hope that the immensity of the world's evil will work out its own cure: that the human race will, in this event, accept the nihilistic gospel of the supreme evil of existence and the universal law of suffering, and that, as the visual ray of mankind is purged by

these doctrines, men will cease to propagate their species, the human race will disappear, and "the blunder of existence" will be corrected. Pending this consummation, Schopenhauer recommends his followers, with much mystic enthusiasm and solemn earnestness, to root out the Will-to-live by voluntary poverty, entire continence, and the various other practices of asceticism. Von Hartmann does not endorse these exhortations. Individual denial of the Will-to-live, he thinks, profiteth little, but in the times to come, he hopes, men will be sufficiently enlightened to execute a common resolve not to will, and thus terminate the long agony of existence. Meanwhile he adjures his disciples, in Biblical terms, to quit them like men, remembering that they have received the first-fruits of the spirit, and as true workers in the vineyard of the Lord to preach the word in season and out of season, in order to hasten the final deliverance for which the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together.

It has been truly remarked by Professor Max Müller that "all higher knowledge is gained by comparison, and rests on comparison."[1] It will be well, therefore, to consider the system of Schopen-

[1] *Lectures on the Science of Religion*, p. 12.

hauer in the light which comparison gives. To do this we must make a long journey, from the banks of the Spree to the banks of the Ganges, from the nineteenth century of the Christian era to the dim antiquity of an uncertain century before Christ. The only true counterpart of modern "reasoned pessimism," (to use Mr. Sully's happy phrase) which the world's history offers, is, I think, to be found in the doctrine of Gotama. I do not forget, indeed, the striking points of similarity afforded by Manicheism, both as to its theoretical positions and its practical results: its attribution of the material universe to an evil principle, its proscription of matrimony as the means of perpetuating the evil, and the unspeakable impurities which were the issue of that proscription.[1] But it is to

[1] A good deal of information upon this subject will be found in St. Augustine: see especially *Contra Secundum*, c. 21. St. Leo bears similar testimony. Of the practical results of Schopenhauerism M. Caro gives the following account: "On dit que dans l'Allemagne, et particulièrement à Berlin, il existe, à l'heure qu'il est, une sorte de secte Schopenhauériste, qui travaille activement à la propagande de ces idées et qui se reconnaît à certains rites, à certaines formules, quelque chose comme une franc-maçonnerie vouée par des serments et des pratiques secrètes à la destruction de l'amour, de ses illusions et de ses œuvres. On nous assure que la secte publie des brochures mystérieuses, pleines d'informations et d'instructions du plus haut intérêt au point de vue de la pathologie morale, mais de l'effet le plus bizarre sur les lecteurs qui ne sont pas initiés. L'apostolat, évidemment dévié, de quelques prosélytes va jusqu'à un degré de folie devant lequel la plume et la pensée s'arrêtent. Quand la théorie d'une chasteté de ce genre, toute

Buddhism that we must go for the true original of Schopenhauer's doctrine, and therefore it is worth while to consider a little the history and teaching of the *Light of Asia*.

Regarding the life and legend of Buddha Gotama, indeed, few words must suffice here, for that is not my present subject, and I shall have to touch upon it in another chapter of this volume.[1] A most beautiful and touching and fascinating story it is, and those who would rightly appreciate it should read it at large, in Bishop Bigandet's invaluable pages, or in the fine poem in which it is enshrined by Mr. Edwin Arnold. It is difficult to understand how any one can rise from the perusal of those works without the profoundest veneration for the moral and spiritual greatness of him who is their subject; whose religion has for twenty-five centuries been the stay in life and the hope in death of a greater number of human hearts than any other mode of faith, and to whom four hundred and fifty millions of our race still turn with the disinterestedness of pure affection as the highest and noblest ideal of which they have knowledge. No amount of prejudice

négative, se produit dans des esprits et des cœurs qui ne sont pas chastes, en vue de fins chimériques, comme la destruction du monde, elle aboutit dans la pratique à un système de compensations que ne sont pas autre chose que des dérèglements sans nom."—*Le Pessimisme*, p. 245.

[1] See p. 149.

appears to have been able to dim the lustre of his personality, to obscure the sweetness and winningness of his character. Even in the full middle ages we find Marco Polo writing, "Had he been a Christian he would have been a great saint of our Lord Jesus Christ, so holy and pure was the life he led"; while in our own day the chief professed opponents of his system, whether Catholic or Anglican prelates, Wesleyan or Baptist missionaries, agree in the judgment of M. Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, one of its severest and least fair critics—that "with the sole exception of the Christ there is no more touching figure than his among the founders of religions," so entirely is he "without spot and blemish," "the finished model of the heroism, the self-renunciation, the love, the sweetness, he commands." Nor, however doubtful many details of his life may be, is there any reasonable room for scepticism as to its main outlines. We know that, of royal lineage and the heir to a throne, he gave up father and wife and child to become a religious mendicant, and that years of heroic mortification and fierce interior trial culminated in that great night under the Bo-tree, upon the bank of the Neranjarā, when, as the Buddhist author expresses it, "he attained supreme enlightenment," and "alone worked out the salvation of the three worlds, and overthrew the whole army of the Prince of Evil." We know how he then entered upon his high task to preach the gospel of pity, to found a kingdom of

righteousness, of which enfranchisement from worldly desires, universal brotherhood, and spiritual equality were the great laws:—

> To give light to them enshrouded in darkness,
> And to open the gate of immortality to men.[1]

We know how during the forty years of his public ministry he went up and down the country watered by the Ganges, occupied, like One greater than he, of whom he may without irreverence be deemed the precursor,[2] in doing good: receiving all who came to him without distinction of rank or caste—his law, he was wont to say, was "a law of grace for all"—but especially calling to him all that laboured and were heavy laden, the poor, the sorrowful, and the sinful, who were above others dear to his pitiful heart. So much is luminously clear "through the mists of fabling time" regarding this great Teacher's life. But in truth the fables are not less valuable sources of information regard-

[1] Beal's *Romantic Legend from the Chinese*, p. 245. Immortality must not be taken in the sense of endless life, but in the very different sense of deliverance from "the load of death called life": cessation of individual existence: or, in the words of the *Sutta Nipâta* "not going to rebirth," "leaving death behind." The passage the Chinese poet has reproduced will be found in *Sacred Books*, vol. xiii. p. 88, § 12.

[2] The late excellent Bishop of Calcutta, Dr. Milman, writes: "Among the heathen precursors of the truth I feel more and more that Sakya-Muni was the nearest in character and effect to Him who is 'the Way, the Truth, and the Life.'"—*Memoir of Bishop Milman*, p. 203.

ing him than the facts themselves. It is a profound saying of Plato, and very pertinent to this subject, that poetry comes nearer vital truth than history.

I shall have occasion to touch again upon this point. I now proceed to glance at the doctrine of the Buddha, the gospel which he spent his life in preaching. Its foundation is the illusoriness of the world, the subjection of all that is, to the great law of mutability, the misery inseparable from the condition of man, so long as he remains in "the whirlpool of existence." In the account which is given of the workings of his mind in the first watch of the great night which he spent under the Bo-tree, he is represented as going through the chain of "the Twelve Causes and Effects,' and tracing back all the evil that is in the world to Ignorance,[1] the prime illusion, the fundamental error of those who cling to individual existence. And in his sermon to the seventy Brahmins he declares "to know as truth that which is true, and to regard as false that which is false, this is perfect rectitude, and shall bring true profit." And then he goes on to point out as the primary truth.—"Everywhere in the world there is death: there is no rest in either of the three worlds. The gods indeed enjoy

[1] They cling to individual existence, because they know not the Four Noble Truths, which are enumerated on the next page, and of which a detailed exposition will be found at pp. 151-154. This Ignorance is the source of all evil and of all suffering. See *Sacred Books*, vol. xiii. p. 76: Bishop Bigandet's *Life or Legend*, vol. i. p. 93.

a period of bliss, but their happiness must also end, and they must also die. To consider this as the condition of all states of being, that there is nothing born but must die, and therefore to desire to escape birth and death, this is to exercise oneself in religious truth."[1] For death is in itself no deliverance from the burden of being. To die is merely to pass from one state of existence to another. So long as *tanhâ*—thirst, passion, desire—remains, the source of being remains. To root out *tanhâ* is the only way of escaping "the yawning gulf of continual birth and death." It is this which is expressed in the Four Truths, thought out by the Buddha, in that great night, after he had followed the sequence of the Twelve Causes and Effects—the Four Noble Truths, as they are called, regarding Suffering, the Cause of Suffering, the Cessation of Suffering, and the Path which leads to the Cessation of Suffering, which may be reckoned great fundamental doctrines of the Buddhist Church. But there are two other tenets of no less importance. In common with almost all oriental thinkers, the Buddha believed in Transmigration—an hypothesis, in support of which a certain amount of evidence[2] may be adduced, and which, as Mr.

[1] Beal's *Dhammapada*, p. 65. I translate "Devas" by "gods."

[2] I refer, of course, to

"Those shadowy recollections"

of which Wordsworth speaks, and

"Which, be they what they may,"

are an indubitable fact of man's mind; a fact affording, as Words-

Rhys Davids observes, "is incapable of disproof, while it affords an explanation, quite complete, to those who can believe in it, of the apparent anomalies and wrongs in the distribution of happiness or woe."[1] The doctrine of *Karma*, which plays so great a part in Buddhism and which is the main source of its moral excellence, is the complement of the doctrine of Transmigration, and the link which connects it with the "Four Noble Truths." It is the teaching of the Buddha that there is no such thing as what is commonly called a soul. The real man is the net result of his merits and demerits, and that net result is called *Karma*. A god, a man, a beast, a bird, or a fish—for there is no essential difference between all living beings—is what he does, what he has done, not only during his present existence, but very far more, during his countless previous existences, in various forms. His actual condition is the result of the deeds done in his former births, and upon his present deeds, plus the past, will depend his destiny in future existences, divine, human, or animal. And the character of his acts depends upon his intention. "All that we are," the Teacher insists, "depends

worth judged, "presumptive evidence of a prior state of existence." See the very interesting note prefixed by him to the magnificent ode in which, as he tells us, "he took hold of the notion of pre-existence as having sufficient foundation in humanity for authorising him to make, for his purpose, the best use of it he could as a poet."

[1] *Buddhism*, p. 100.

upon what we have thought."[1] Thus life in all its grades, from the highest to the lowest, is, in the strictest sense, a time of probation. "Two things in this world are immutably fixed," the Buddha is reported to have said upon another occasion—"that good actions bring happiness, and that bad actions bring misery."[2] In the pregnant Buddhist phrase, "we pass away, according to our deeds," to be reborn in heaven, or in hell, or upon the earth as man or animal, according to our *Karma*. To say that a man's works follow him when he dies, *that* what he has sown *here* he shall reap *there*, falls far short of this tremendous doctrine. His works *are* himself, he *is* what he has sown. All else drops from him at death. His body decays and falls into nothingness; and not only his material properties (*Rûpa*), but his sensations (*Vedanâ*), his abstract ideas (*Sannâ*), his mental and moral predispositions (*Sankhârâ*), and his thought or reason (*Vinnâna*)—all these constituent elements of his being pass away. But his *Karma* remains, unless he has attained to the supreme state of *Arahat*—the crown of Buddhist saintship—when *Karma* is extinguished and *Nirvâna* is attained.

Such is *Karma*—a great mystery which the limited intellect of ordinary man can but contemplate as it were "through a glass, darkly": only

[1] Professor Max Müller's *Dhammapada* in *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. x. p. 3.

[2] Beal's *Dhammapada*, p. 75.

the perfectly enlightened mind of a Buddha can fully fathom it. As I have observed, it is closely connected with the Four Noble Truths. The cause of demerit is *tanhâ*, which appears to present some analogy to concupiscence, as Catholic theologians define it: "a certain motion and power of mind whereby men are driven to desire ... things that they do not possess." That dual cause of sin, of sorrow, and of suffering. To blot out this thirst is the only way to obtain salvation, release from the evil which is of the essence of existence: and, as the fourth of the Noble Truths teaches, "the means of obtaining the individual annihilation of desire" is supplied by the eightfold Path of Holiness.[1] Abolition of self, living for others, is the substance of the Buddhist plan of salvation. "Scrupulously avoiding all wicked actions, reverently performing all virtuous ones, purifying our intentions from all selfish ends—this is the doctrine of all the Buddhas."[2] Thus does man conquer himself: and, "having conquered himself, there will be no further ground for birth." And so the Chinese poet commenting upon the *Pratimoksha*:—

> The heart, scrupulously avoiding all idle dissipation,
> Diligently applying itself to the holy law of Buddha,
> Letting go all lust and consequent disappointment,
> Fixed and unchangeable, enters on Nirvâna.[3]

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[1] As to which see p. 152.

[2] Beal's *Catena of Buddhist Scriptures*, p. 156. [3] *Ibid.* p. 159.

This is the blissful state which results from the extinction of desire: this is the highest conquest of self[1]; it is the fulness

Of deep and liquid rest forgetful of all ill.

Those who have attained to this "peace which passeth understanding,"[2] even the gods envy, we are told. "Their old *Karma* is being exhausted; no new *Karma* is being produced; their hearts are free from the longing after future life; the cause of existence being destroyed, and no new yearnings springing up within them, they, the wise, are extinguished like this lamp."[3]

Such are the leading features of the doctrine contained in Buddhist canonical books, and, whether it proceeded to a greater or less extent in this form from the Master's lips, it may safely be regarded as a correct representation of his mind. When not

[1] "When Buddha had arrived at complete enlightenment, he thought within himself, the perfect Rest which results from the extinction of desire—this is the highest conquest of self."—Beal's *Catena of Buddhist Scriptures*, p. 190.

[2] "Most difficult for the people to understand will be the extinction of all Sankhâras (tendencies or potentialities), the getting rid of the substrata (of existence), the destruction of desire (tanhâ), the absence of passion, quietude of heart, Nirvâna." Mahâvagga, I. 5. 2. *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xiii. p. 85.

[3] *Rattana Sutta*, quoted by Mr. Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, p. 111.

directly referrable to him, it is a legitimate explication of his teaching. The possession of a power of development is necessary to the vitality of any religious system; here, as elsewhere, growth, assimilation, change, are the condition and the evidence of life. Nor if we once know the essential idea or type of doctrine—and in the case of Buddhism we undoubtedly do possess that knowledge—is there much difficulty in distinguishing between its true developments and the corruptions by which it is sure to be overlaid when it is received into the popular mind. It must be remembered, too, that the Buddha's reformation was chiefly moral and social, that his message to the world was for the most part no new thing. His mission was not to destroy the old belief but to develop and quicken what in it was real, spiritual, and earnest. I do not know that there is any portion of his teaching which may not be more or less clearly traced in the older systems. Even his dogma of *Karma*—the fount of the moral purity, the humility, the self-conquest, the universal charity, which are stamped upon his system, and which have won for him the praise of being the first of Indian sages to give a universal character to morality—is but a modification of a doctrine which he found "deeply rooted in the popular conscience."[1]

[1] In the view of the authors of the *Upanishads* the separated condition of the soul, which is the cause of mental error, is also the cause of moral evil. Ignorant of its true nature, the soul attaches

And now it is time to return to Schopenhauer. I have said enough to show how much his doctrine has in common with that of Gotama. What the founder of modern "reasoned pessimism" leaves out in his new edition of Buddhism for the use of

itself to objects unworthy of it. Every act which it performs to gratify this attachment entangles it deeper in the perishable world; and as it is itself imperishable it is condemned to a perpetual series of changes. Once dragged into the *samsâra*, into the vortex of life, it passes from one existence into another, without respite and without rest. This is the twofold doctrine of the *karman*, *i.e.* the act by which the soul determines its own destiny, and of the *punarbhava*, *i.e.* the successive re-births in which it undergoes it. This doctrine, which is henceforth the fundamental hypothesis common to all the religions and sects of India, is found formulated in the *Upanishads* for the first time. In the most ancient portions of the *Brâhmanas* it appears of small account, and with less range of application. The faith we find there seems simply to be that the man who has led an immoral life may be condemned to return into this world to undergo here an existence of misery. Re-birth is only a form of punishment: it is the opposite of the celestial life, and tantamount to the infernal. It is not yet what it is here, and what it will continue to be eventually, the state of personal being, a state which may be realised in endlessly diverse forms of being, from that of the insect up to that of the god, but all of equal instability and subject to relapse. It is impossible to fix the period at which this old belief found in the new metaphysical ideas the medium favourable to its expansion; but it is certain that from the end of the sixth century before our era, when Çâkyamuni was meditating his work of salvation, the doctrine, such as it appears in the *Upanishads*, was almost complete, and already deeply rooted in the popular conscience. Without this *point d'appui* the spread of Buddhism would hardly be intelligible. Barth, *The Religions of India*, p. 78, Authorised Translation by the Rev. J. Wood in Trübner's *Oriental Series*, p. 78.

the nineteenth century are its poetry and its metaphysics, and these are precisely the two elements which are the source of its greatness and of its stupendous triumphs, and which, therefore, we may take to be its truest parts; for it is by what is true in it that a religion, a philosophy, lives in the world, and subdues the minds of men. "Man consists in truth," as Novalis finely remarks. And more than this, it is only when truth is "embodied in a tale;" that it enters in "at lowly doors," only when it is "linked to flesh and blood," that it wins its way among the vast majority of our race, who busy, sensual, dull as they are, yet by a true instinct confess and worship the something more than human which shines forth in the teachers and patterns of holiness, and truth, and self-denial. The life of the Buddha has given vitality to his precepts: to imitate him has been the higher law which has transformed the lives of his disciples. The poetry of Buddhism—and is not religion the sublimest expression of poetry?—centres round his noble figure, instinct with the supernatural, revelatory of the unseen, appealing not to men's lower natures but to that which, according to the wisdom of the ancients,[1] marks us off from the beasts; the power of looking up for something higher than

[1] ἄνθρωπος was explained to mean ὁ ἄνω ἀθρῶν, the looker up; the other animals being, in Sallust's phrase, "prona atque ventri obedientia."

sense or reason supplies. The Buddha is no mere man, as other men are, to the countless millions who have believed on him, but a great being who, moved with compassion for mankind, left the glory he had among the gods to redeem the world by his "most excellent law" and his perfect example. It is not the philanthropic philosopher, but the legendary Saviour, who had lived in the hearts of his votaries for so many ages, calling up in them some image, however faint, of himself; some reflection, however dim, of his unearthly majesty.

Schopenhauer's version of Buddhism leaves out this superhuman ideal round which it centres: leaves out, too, its metaphysics, upon which its noble and severe morality depends. For those metaphysics Schopenhauer substitutes speculations still more vain, fantastic, and arbitrary. The doctrines of *Karma* and Transmigration may be dark and difficult enough; but they are rational and winning beside Schopenhauer's Will theory. His fundamental conception of a φύσις without a νοῦς involves, theoretically, an absurdity which Aristotle has unanswerably pointed out;[1] while its practical effect would be to overthrow the only bases upon which any ethical system has ever existed in the world as a living power. It is a simple fact that every code of morals by which the unruly wills and affections of men have been

[1] See chapters 3 and 4 of the first book of the *Metaphysica*.

governed has derived its sanctions from the invisible, the supersensual. And so the corner-stone of the Buddha's teaching is that there rules in the universe a supremely just law, "a power not ourselves, a stream of tendency that makes for righteousness." And it is to man's conscience, free will, and instinct of retribution that he appeals when he preaches the "Five Aversions obligatory on all men,"[1] and "the Six Transcendent Virtues whereby a man passes to the other shore."[2] To Schopenhauer all this is the idlest of verbiage. The more closely the Buddha's system is compared with his, the more radical will their difference be seen to be. The one unfolds the royal law of universal pity, the other proclaims, by way of gospel, the utter despicability of mankind. The one law raised woman to an elevation never before attained by her in the oriental world: the other degrades her to a merely noxious animal. The one is the widest emancipatory movement the human race has ever known: the other issues in the despotism of sheer force. The one teaches that a man is what he does: the other that a man is what he eats. "The words of the Buddha are holy words;"[3] the

[1] Not to kill, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to lie, not to become intoxicated.

[2] Almsgiving, charity, purity, patience, courage, and wisdom shown in contemplation and science.

[3] Chinese translator of the *Dhammapada*. *See* Beal's *Dhammapada*, p. 30.

mouth of the Apostle of modern Pessimism is full of cursing and bitterness: the doctrines of the Gotama are the purest emanations of Aryan religious thought:[1] the speculations of Schopenhauer issue in atheistic materialism. This may seem a hard saying regarding a system in which the idealistic view of the world is made a leading principle, and materialism is refuted—successfully refuted—in so many words. But the fact remains that whoever heartily accepts Schopenhauer will find himself, like Professor Huxley and Professor Tyndall, expressing an universal nescience in terms of materialism. Now it is easy to forget—I had almost said to *burke*—the nescience, but impossible not to be more and more affected by the materialism. In the great masters, materialism may have its

[1] It is matter of much surprise to me that so many accomplished scholars have spoken of Buddhism as atheistic. It seems to me to be clear from the canonical books that Gotama, a Hindu of the Hindus, recognised all the innumerable deities of the Brahminical pantheon; and his followers have adopted, or at the least have respected, the gods of the countries they have evangelised. I cannot help thinking that when Buddhism is called Atheistic, all that is meant is that it does not possess the conception of the personal creative God of Monotheism. This is undoubtedly true. Buddhism, like all Aryan religions, is Pantheistic, with at the least a tendency to Acosmism, and the notion of creation is foreign to the Aryan mind; there is, I believe, no word, either in Sanskrit or Pâli, which properly expresses it. The conception of emanation takes its place. Fichte maintains that "the arrangement of the moral sentiments and relations, that is, the moral order of the universe, is God," and this seems pretty much to express the Buddhistic view of the Supreme Power ruling over gods and men. Compare Lord Tennyson's verses *The Higher Pantheism*.

subtleties and graces not its own. In the multitude it speedily sinks to its proper level and becomes a crude disbelief in whatever lies out of the senses' grasp; which disbelief, appearing in a positive form, is the ancient doctrine that ginger is hot in the mouth, or what Mr. Carlyle has called Pig Philosophy.

It is as a sign of the times, then, rather than on account of any intrinsic merits which it possesses, that Schopenhauerism deserves our attention. It is curious and significant that the latest word of Western speculative thought should be of this kind; that it should account of human life, not only as not worth living, but as supremely and irremediably evil; that it should explain the universe as the sport of a malign, irrational power, and hold out annihilation as the only hope of humanity. Still such is the fact. What is its meaning?

One great note of the modern world is its intense self-consciousness. It is a characteristic which specially distinguishes it both from classical antiquity and medieval Christendom. Ancient Greece and Rome hated and proscribed the *Ego*, and—what is more important for my present purpose—the Catholicism of the Middle Ages, although recognising the supreme value of the individual soul, and addressing itself primarily to the individual conscience, yet by no means left men in

introspective subjectivity, a chaos of disconnected atoms, but drawing them together by the strongest principle of cohesion the world has ever known, a belief in a divine fraternity, worked, according to the Evangelical similitude, as leaven upon the mass of humanity. The conception of the family, the *gens*, which had been the unit of archaic society, remained, although enlarged and spiritualised. The Catholic Church was the Christian family, a *gens sancta*, and its members were *domestici Dei*. The great thought by which Christendom was permeated and knit together was the thought of God, the beginning and final end of each soul, but apprehended in the household of faith in which each soul had its fellowship of sacred things. And more than this, participation in religious rites was the great tie, also, of associations whose characters were most distinctly secular, such as military orders, municipal corporations, and trade guilds. This, then, was the organisation of human society in the Middle Ages—an organisation based on the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of Christians as the great objective facts of life. And this organisation remained long after the medieval period had closed. "Dieu seul est le lien de notre société," Malebranche could still write in the seventeenth century. The whole tendency of what is specifically denominated "modern thought," whether as formulated in the eighteenth century or in the nineteenth, has been to eliminate the idea of God.

This was manifestly the issue of that "experimental psychology" of which Locke was the most popular exponent in this country, and which, receiving from the French intellect a complete and logical development, soon became predominant throughout Europe. And it is also the issue of the vastly different doctrine which was originated by Kant, and formulated by him in the *Critique of Pure Reason* — that wonderful book which, whatever may be our feelings towards it, is certainly one of the profoundest things that ever issued from the human intellect. Of course Kant differed *toto cœlo* from the French *philosophes* as to his fundamental principles. Holbach and Cabanis, who said the last word of their school, reduce everything to physics. They hold that there is no thing-in-itself behind phenomena; that the phenomenon is the thing-in-itself. Kant holds that the distinction between physics and metaphysics is the distinction between that which appears and that which is, the latter being the only reality, the only "thing-in-itself," but being, also, unknowable. Hence, he concludes, ontology is impossible. He does not admit the existence in man of an immaterial power of perception by which, penetrating through the phenomenal, we reach the noumenal. He acknowledges only a perception within the limits of the relative.[1] Here our knowledge ends, noumena

[1] Related, that is, to the Forms and Categories, and therefore capable of being apprehended.

being beyond our reach; our conceptions of time and space being mere "mental forms," as he speaks, while propositions about God, the soul, immortality, are incapable of being either proved or disproved.[1] Thus does the *Critique of Pure Reason* make a *tabula rasa*, not only of what the world once called the Supernatural Order, but of the Natural Order also, except so far as regards phenomena; while even with regard to phenomena it allows only of a conditional certitude, for phenomena are but the phantasmagoria of sense. The result, as Heine has finely said, is that men find themselves much in the condition of the prisoners described by Plato at the beginning of the seventh book of his Republic. It is an underground, cavernous chamber which we are there asked to picture to ourselves, but with an opening above towards the light. In it sit, and have sat from childhood, a number of men fast bound in misery and iron, not able so much as to turn their heads round, and so seeing nothing but what is straight before them. At a distance above and behind them a bright fire burns, and between the fire and the prisoners there is a raised way, with a low wall built along it, like the screens which the marionette-players put up in front of their audience, and above which they display their

[1] It is, of course, only of the *speculative* reason that Kant says this. But I am throughout speaking not of his teaching as a whole, but of one part of it, the *Critique of Pure Reason*, which is commonly, but improperly, taken apart from the totality.

puppets. Behind this wall, walk a number of persons, bearing vessels and images of wood and stone, and various other materials. The captives, sitting without the power of turning their heads, see their own shadows—which are all they see of themselves and each other—and the shadows of the objects carried past, upon the part of the cavern facing them, and hear the voices thence reverberated, for there is an echo in their prison-house. And they refer these sounds, not to the unseen passers-by, of whom they have no knowledge, but to the passing shadows, which are all they can see, and which they take for realities. Strange and weird conception! Apt image of the phantasmal and disinherited world to which we are reduced by the sage of Königsberg.

The *Critique of Pure Reason* has given the tone to the speculative thought of the century, and has infiltrated itself into the minds of millions who have never read one line of it. Nor can there be any doubt that if taken by itself—Kant, we should always remember, did not mean it to be so taken—it issues in Nihilism, or, in Heine's phrase, puts a knife to the throat of Theism. Thus, as I have said, the result of "modern thought" has been to dissolve the great idea which in the time of Malebranche was still, as it had been for a thousand years, the bond of society in every department of human activity; to unloose that bond and to throw men back upon themselves. It has been observed

by Richter, "No one in Nature is so alone as the denier of God. He mourns with an orphaned heart that has lost its great Father, by the Corpse of Nature which no World-Spirit moves and holds together, and which grows in its grave; and he mourns by that Corpse until he himself crumble off it."[1] To this terrible feeling of loneliness is clearly traceable that intense self-consciousness of which I just now made mention, as being a special note of the modern mind, and which is the necessary product of its all-absorbing scepticism, and the very source and fount of its profound despondency. The world has not for a long time witnessed such a spectacle as that which is presented in the present age, of a vast number of men and women, possessing a certain amount of intellectual cultivation, endowed with a sufficiency of the gifts of fortune to dispense them from that necessity of daily toil which assuages, if it does not heal, the malady of thought,[2] and quite devoid of first principles of faith and action. For a parallel to it we must go back to the days of Seneca and Petronius, of Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius; and indeed the tone of sentiment characteristic of the decadent and moribund Roman Empire presents a curious affinity to that which

[1] I borrow Mr. Carlyle's translation, *Mis. Essays*, vol. ii. p. 164.

[2] It is hardly necessary to quote *Candide*: "Travaillons sans raisonner," dit Martin; "c'est le seul moyen de rendre la vie supportable."

finds expression in the literature of the nineteenth century: it is sicklied o'er with the same pale cast of thought, the same morbid self-introspection and egoistic melancholy. It is the doom of this generation, and its special misery,

> To know the change and feel it,
> When there is none to heal it,
> Nor numbèd sense to steal it.

No: not numbèd sense, but the vastly enhanced capacity of suffering which the increase of knowledge and the amelioration of the physical conditions of existence have developed. In this hopelessness and desolation, Schopenhauer arises to solve the terrible enigma of life, and he offers the solution which we have seen. Claiming to be the true successor of Kant, and to continue and complete the doctrine of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, he expounds the thing-in-itself which his master had left unexplained, and tells us that the reality behind the phenomenal world is—not God—but that irrational demoniacal entity, "that power not ourselves, that stream of tendency that makes for" evil, which he calls Will.

Such is the message of modern thought: the last word of the movement which, as M. Caro truly observes, has "destroyed everything, the reality of God, the reality of duty, the reality of man's personality, the morality of science."[1] Making

[1] *Le Pessimisme*, p. 292.

all deductions which may fairly be made for exaggerations due, whether to an atrabilious temperament or to mortified vanity, the picture which Schopenhauer draws of human existence with the void thus caused in it seems to me to be unquestionably true. He raises directly the question, with a vigour, a clearness, a logical incisiveness, peculiarly his own, whether life shorn of its theistic basis is worth living. Nor is it easy to see what answer can be given to the pessimistic argument save that supplied by religious faith. "How can I hold myself up in this misèrable life, unless Thou strengthen me with Thy mercy and Thy grace?"[1] asks the medieval mystic, and the nineteenth century echoes back the How? "Un monde sans Dieu est horrible," M. Renan confesses. To Schopenhauer belongs the merit of having exhibited that horror in its fulness.

A thing may be horrible and yet true. Its horror supplies no sufficient reason for pronouncing it to be false, but does supply a very strong reason for searching inquiry as to its truth, by those whom it concerns. If nihilistic pessimism flows naturally from the negation of God, and if the negation of God is involved in the theory of human knowledge presented in the *Critique of Pure Reason*,

[1] *De Imitatione Christi*, lib. iii. c. 3. Compare the noble lines in book iv. of *The Excursion*,

> One adequate support
> For the calamities of mortal life &c.

taken by itself, we are imperiously led to inquire whether that theory is complete, as Schopenhauer alleged it to be. Does it not leave out of sight a whole aspect of man's nature, and that the most important aspect? Are not spiritual facts and spiritual faculties as indubitable as those wherewith the physicist is concerned? These are questions worthy surely of deeper consideration than they apparently receive from the majority of the ready writers and fluent speakers who most confidently meet them with a negative reply.

There is a curious passage in Gwinner, where we are told how Schopenhauer, upon one occassion, was deeply moved upon seeing a picture of Rancé, the saintly founder of La Trappe. He gazed upon it for a long time, and then, turning away with a pained look, said, "That is a matter of grace." Strange words in such a mouth! and in an age which among its many manifold discoveries has lighted, as we are assured, upon the true method of "finding out" religions. I suppose that in the judgment of the highly gifted persons who value themselves upon their proficiency in that art, the spectacle of this latest master of modern thought adopting the language of an exploded superstition, is but a melancholy token how difficult it is for the strongest intellect to gain complete emancipation.

They may say so if they will. It is a characteristic of their school to be "très affirmatif dans la négation." Still there is another explanation, which will require something more than the contemptuous dogmatism of contemporary finders out of religion to discredit it for many minds not ashamed to avow themselves followers of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, of Pascal and Butler, of Maine de Biran and Cardinal Newman. That explanation is, that in this moment, at least, of his dark and ignoble existence, Religion had found out Schopenhauer; that the light which, beaming from the holy ascetic's face, dazzled and dismayed him was in truth a reflection of that uncreated light—"æternum atque indeficiens"—which the pure in heart see, and which is "the life of men." "Beata quippe vita est gaudium de veritate. Hoc est enim gaudium de Te qui veritas es, Deus illuminatio mea, salus faciei meæ, Deus meus. Ipsa est beata vita, gaudere ad Te, de Te, propter Te. Ipsa est; et non est altera."[1]

[1] St. Augus. *Confes.* lib. x.

CHAPTER II.

THE CLAIM OF ANCIENT RELIGION.

I PROPOSE in this chapter to consider a Religious Movement of the Nineteenth Century, specially interesting to Englishmen, and by no means without a bearing upon those great fundamental questions which modern philosophical speculation, as I have pointed out,[1] so directly and so imperiously raises. I shall inquire what Tractarianism was in itself, and what is its significance for us. The time has perhaps now come when this can be done without exciting those polemical passions which the bare mention of Tractarianism was once sure to arouse. Most of the learned and zealous men who took part in the great controversy enkindled by the publication of the *Tracts for the Times* have passed away: and those of them who remain, and are still with us, have, for the most part, been carried by the tide of time into positions whence they may retrace their ancient struggles in the calm spirit of the Grecian warrior describing his Trojan campaign:

> Hic ibat Simois: hæc est Sigeia tellus;
> Pingit et exiguo Pergama tota mero.

The Tractarian Movement has become matter of history: and, like all great moral, intellectual,

[1] See pp. 43—45.

and spiritual movements, is most accurately and most fruitfully studied in the person and action of its leader. Nor can there be any doubt who its true leader was. The judgment of our own day is in accord with the judgment of Cardinal Newman's contemporaries, in regarding him as its originator, so far as its origin can be referred to any one man, in fastening upon him the main responsibility for all that has come out of it. I shall have to touch upon this point again. For the moment it will be sufficient to observe that in what I am about to write regarding the real character and more notable results of the Tractarian Movement, I shall seek my main documents in Cardinal Newman's works. Now one special note of those works which renders them of the utmost value for my present purpose is their strong individuality. They are all instinct with that egotism which, to use a happy expression of their author, is, in some cases, the truest modesty. Each in its different way and in its varying degree has for us its revelation about him. Thus the *Grammar of Assent* does for us objectively what the *Apologia* does subjectively. The *Essay on Development* is confessedly a chapter—the last—in the workings of the author's mind which issued in his submission to Rome. There is perhaps not one of his *Oxford Sermons* which, as he has told us of the famous discourse on Wisdom and Innocence, was not written with a secret reference to himself. His verses are the expression of personal feelings,

the greater part of them, to give his own account, growing out of that religious movement which he followed so faithfully from first to last.[1] And, further, we have his present criticism upon his former self, his ultimate judgments upon his early views, in the prefaces and notes with which he has enriched the new editions of his old works. Thus we possess in his volumes not only the story of his life, but, in some degree, his comment thereon.

> Ille velut fidis arcana sodalibus olim
> Credebat libris, neque si male cesserat unquam
> Decurreus alio, neque si bene, quo fit ut omnis
> Votiva pateat veluti descripta tabella
> Vita senis.

Cardinal Newman's life runs with the century. It is to the age of Pitt and Fox, of Napoleon and Pius VII., of Scott and Byron, of Coleridge and Kant, that we must go back to survey the moral, political, and religious surroundings of his early years—surroundings which largely influence every man, and the more largely in proportion to the receptivity and retentiveness of his intellectual constitution. To form some apprehension of the spiritual element in which Cardinal Newman lived and moved during the time when his character was matured and his first principles were formed, is a

[1] Dedication to Mr. Badeley of *Verses upon Various Occasions*, p. vii.

necessary condition precedent to any true understanding of what he is and of what he has wrought. Let us therefore glance at the condition of English religious thought at that period.

Perhaps it is not too much to say that never, during its course of well-nigh two thousand years in the world, has Christianity presented less of the character of a spiritual religion than during the last half of the eighteenth century. Not in England only, but throughout Europe, the general aim of its accredited teachers seems to have been to explain away its mysteries, to extenuate its supernatural character, to reduce it to a system of ethics little differing from the doctrines of Epictetus or Marcus Aurelius. Religious dogmas were almost openly admitted to be nonsense. Religious emotion was openly stigmatized as enthusiasm. Theology, from being "the science of things divine," had sunk into apologies, opposing, too often, weak answers to strong objections, and into evidences, endeavouring, for the most part with the smallest result, to establish the existence of a vague possible Deity. Even the sanctions of morality were sought in the lowest instincts of human nature, the reason for doing good assigned in the received text-books of philosophy being, in effect, "that God is stronger than we are, and able to damn us if we do not." The prevailing religion of the day may be accurately judged of from the most widely popular of its homiletic works, those thrice-famous sermons of

Blair's, which were at one time to be found in well-nigh every family of the upper and middle classes of this country, and which may still be discovered in the remoter shelves of the libraries in most country-houses. No one can look into these discourses without admitting the truth of Mr. Leslie Stephen's trenchant criticism that "they represent the last stage of theological decay."[1] For unction there is mere mouthing; for the solid common sense of earlier writers, an infinite capacity for repeating the feeblest platitudes; the morality can scarcely be dignified by the name of prudential, unless all prudence be summed up in the command, "Be respectable"; the pages are full of solemn trifling—prosings about adversity and prosperity, eulogies upon the most excellent of virtues, Moderation, and proofs that religion is, upon the whole, productive of pleasure. As Mr. Mill accurately sums the matter up—"The age seemed smitten with an incapacity of producing deep or strong feeling, such at least as could ally itself with meditative habits. There were few poets, and none of a high order; and philosophy had fallen into the hands of men of a dry prosaic nature, who had not enough of the materials of human feeling in them to imagine any of its more complex and mysterious manifestations; all of which they either left out of

[1] *English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. ii. p. 346. The remarks in my following sentence are an abridgment of an admirable page—the next—of Mr. Stephen's book.

their theories, or introduced them with such explanations as no one who had experienced the feelings could receive as adequate." [1]

Such was the dominant school of English thought about the time when Cardinal Newman was born. But beside it there was another which exercised a strong influence over a not inconsiderable number of adherents, and which potently affected the growth of his character and the formation of his opinions. Among the figures conspicuous in the history of England in the last century, there is perhaps none more worthy of careful study than John Wesley. Make all deductions you please for his narrowness, his self-conceit, his extravagance, and still it remains that no one so nearly approaches the fulness of stature of the great heroes of Christian spiritualism in the early and middle ages. He had more in common with St. Boniface and St. Bernardine of Sienna, with St. Vincent Ferrer, and Savonarola, than any teacher whom Protestantism has ever produced. Nor is the rise of the religious body commonly known by his name—the "people called Methodists" was his way of designating his followers—by any means the most important of the results of his life and labours. It is not too much to say that he, and those whom he formed and influenced, chiefly kept alive in England the idea of a supernatural order during the dull materialism and selfish coldness of the eighteenth century. To

[1] *Discussions and Dissertations*, vol. i. p. 430.

him the rise of the Evangelical party in the National Church is undoubtedly due. Romaine and Newton, Venn and Jowett, Milner and Simeon, differing as they did from him on particular doctrines, derived from him that fundamental tenet of religious conversion which they termed "the new birth." It is easy now, as it ever was, to ridicule the grotesque phraseology of these teachers, to make merry over their sour superstitions, their ignorant fanaticism, to detect and pillory their intellectual littleness. It is not easy to estimate adequately the work which they did by reviving the idea of Grace in the Established Church. They were not theologians, they were not philosophers, they were not scholars. Possibly only two of them, Cecil and Scott, can be said to rise above a very low level of mental mediocrity. But they were men who felt the powers of the world to come in an age when that world had become to most little more than an unmeaning phrase; who spoke of a God to pray to, in a generation which knew chiefly of one to swear by; who made full proof of their ministry by signs and wonders parallel to those of the prophetic vision. It was in truth a valley of dry bones in which the Evangelical clergyman of the opening nineteenth century was set; and as he prophesied there was a noise, and behold, a shaking, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

In this army John Henry Newman was led to enrol himself in early youth. He has himself told us how, in the autumn of 1816, he fell under the influence of a definite creed, and received into his intellect impressions of dogma which have never been effaced nor obscured; how "the conversations and sermons of that excellent man, long dead, the Rev. Walter Mayers, of Pembroke College, Oxford," were "the human means of the beginning of this divine faith" in him; how he is "still more certain of the inward conversion of which he was then conscious, than that he has hands or feet."[1] Cardinal Newman's earliest religious reading was of authors such as Romaine, Thomas Scott, Joseph Milner, whose works were then the text-books of the Evangelical school. But he also studied attentively two writers of very different characters, both of whom made a deep impression upon his mind: William Law, the non-juror, whose *Serious Call*, it will be remembered, was such a powerful agent in John Wesley's spiritual history, and Bishop Newton, whose work upon the Prophecies is the very fount and source of an "expository" literature, still dearly cherished by Exeter Hall. In 1816 he was entered at Trinity College, Oxford, and during the whole of his undergraduate course he adhered rigidly to the straitest sect of the Evangelicals. It was not until 1822 that his spiritual horizon began to widen. In that year he came under the influence

[1] *Apologia pro Vitâ Suâ*, p. 4.

of Dr. Whately, who, he tells us, "emphatically opened my mind and taught me to think, and to use my reason."[1] It is curious to find him particularly specifying among his obligations to Dr. Whately, this:—"What he did for me in point of religious opinion was to teach me the existence of the Church as a substantive body or corporation; next to fix in me those anti-Erastian views of Church polity which were one of the most prominent features of the Tractarian movement." At the same time he formed a friendship with a worthy representative of the classic High Church school of Anglicanism, Dr. Hawkins, then Vicar of St. Mary's, who was the means of great additions to his belief. From him he derived directly the doctrine of Tradition, and indirectly the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration; while Mr. James of Oriel taught him the dogma of Apostolical Succession, and Mr. Blanco White led him "to have freer views on the subject of inspiration than were usual in the Church of England at that time."[2] Still more important were his obligations to Butler, whom he began to read about the year 1823. He regards the study of the *Analogy* as an era in his religious opinions, and refers to it the underlying principles of a great portion of his teaching: Sacramentalism and Probability.[3] It is manifest that while acquiring these

[1] *Apologia pro Vitâ Suâ*, pp. 11, 12. [2] *Ibid.* pp. 8, 9.

[3] By the sacramental system, in the large sense of the word, Cardinal Newman means "the doctrine that material phenomena

new views he was widely diverging from the standards of orthodoxy of his Evangelical friends. Among the many legends which have grown up about him is one attributing his final separation from them to the rejection in 1826 of two hundred and fifty amendments said to have been moved by him to the draft of the annual report of the Oxford Bible Society, of which body, according to the story, he was "third secretary": amendments directed to the purgation of that document from the strange verbiage which was the outward visible sign of the Low Church spirit. Unfortunately a word from Cardinal Newman has dispelled this amusing myth. "I never was any kind of secretary to the Bible Society," he tells me, "and I never moved any amendments at all."

There is, however, one grain of truth in the story. It was, indeed, about the year 1826 that John Henry Newman's ties with the Evangelical party were finally severed. But though no longer of them, as a professed adherent, he retained much that he had learned from them. In particular their fundamental doctrine of Grace, that is, of a sensible, supernatural, and direct divine influence upon the soul of man, remained, and has remained up to this day, with him as a prime and vital verity.

are both the types and the instruments of real things unseen."—*Apologia*, p. 18. Butler's teaching, "that probability is the guide of life," he considers to have originally led him to "the question of the logical cogency of faith," on which he has "written so much."—*Ibid.* p. 11.

For some little time from 1826 he continued unattached to any theological section or school. The old high and dry party, the two-bottle orthodox, then predominant in the university, were little to his taste, although he sympathised vehemently with their political opinions; and for the first few years of his residence as a Fellow at Oriel—he had been elected in 1822— he lived very much alone. In 1826 he began a close and tender friendship with Richard Hurrell Froude, never dimmed nor interrupted during the short career of that many-sided and highly-gifted man. Robert Isaac Wilberforce, who, like Froude, was then a Probationer Fellow of Oriel, was also among his most intimate companions, and there were others—their names need not be enumerated here—who were drawn to him by the strong ties of kindred minds, like aspirations, and the many inexpressible influences engendered by community of academical life. One thing which especially bound together the little knot of men who constituted the original nucleus of the future Tractarian party was an irrepressible dissatisfaction with the religious schools of the day; an eager looking out for deeper and more definite teaching. It may be truly said—the phrase I think is Cardinal Newman's—that this feeling was in the air of the epoch. The French Revolution, shattering the framework of society throughout Europe was but the manifestation in the public order of great intellectual and spiritual changes. England,

indeed, shut off from the Continent by her insular position, and by the policy of the great minister whose strong hand guided her destinies for so many perilous years, was exempt, to a great extent, from the influence of the general movement of European thought. Still, in England too there arose the longing — vague, half expressed, not half understood—for some better thing, truer and higher, and more profound than the ideas of the outworn world could yield: a longing which found quite other manifestations than the Evangelical. Striking evidence of this feeling is afforded by the reception given to the delineation of the fuller life of a simpler age, which was attempted in the poetry and prose fictions of Sir Walter Scott. "The general need of something more attractive than had offered itself elsewhere"—as Cardinal Newman remarks—"led to his popularity, and by means of this popularity he reacted on his readers, stimulating their mental thirst, feeding their hopes, setting before them visions which when once seen are not easily forgotten, and silently indoctrinating them with nobler ideas, which might afterwards be appealed to as first principles."[1] Byron and Shelley too bear witness in a different way to the working in the English mind of the ferment with which the European intellect was leavened. But of the actual movement of contemporary thought and feeling

[1] "Essay on the Prospects of the Anglican Church," reprinted in *Essays Critical and Historical*, vol. i. p. 267.

upon the Continent little was definitely understood in England. The great reaction in France against the eighteenth century, the initiation of which will be in the event, and, indeed, even now is, Chateaubriand's best title to fame, was very faintly appreciated among us, and the masters of the new literature in Germany were scarcely even heard of. For long years Goethe was known in this country only by Sir Walter Scott's translation of one of his earliest and least significant works; and of Lessing, Schiller, Tieck, Richter, Novalis, the two Schlegels, it might be said, with almost literal truth, that they were not known at all. Kantism was an epithet significant of "absurdity, wickedness, and horror," and was freely used to label any "frantic exaggeration in sentiment," or "crude fever dream in opinion," which might anywhere break forth.[1] Slowly, however, but surely, did the new critical philosophy infiltrate itself into this country, through the most metaphysical head which this country has ever produced. Samuel Taylor Coleridge was the first among English thinkers to study and understand Kant, to assimilate his teaching, and to reproduce it in a new form.[2] Rejecting with disgust

[1] Carlyle's *Miss. Essays*, vol. i. p. 56.

[2] I find the late Professor Green stating this fact in a somewhat different way: "The last generation took its notions about Kant chiefly from Coleridge, and though Coleridge, if he would have taken the necessary trouble, could have expounded him as no one else could, he in fact did little more than convey to his country-

the physical method which he found predominant in English speculation, he discerned in the transcendentalism of Kant a higher and nobler system than the materialism of Locke or the utilitarianism of Paley. Coleridge, indeed, was no blind disciple of his Teutonic master. It may be truly said of him that he was

Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri.

His mind was too original to allow him to be a mere echo of other men's thoughts. It is, however, as he used to insist, to Kant, that he owes, with much else, that distinction between the Understanding and the Reason—*Verstand* and *Vernunft*—which is one of his fundamental positions; which, indeed, he considered essential to any profitable study of psychology. But the philosophy of Coleridge is too great a subject to be dealt with here. I can only observe that its influence upon the mind of his age was far more potent than is generally understood. In my judgment he is to English thought of the nineteenth century pretty much what Locke is to English thought of the eighteenth century. I am, however, immediately concerned with his effect upon that particular intellectual and spiritual phase represented by the Tractarian Movement. Cardinal Newman, in a

men the grotesquely false impression that Kant had sought to establish the existence of a mysterious intellectual faculty called Reason, the organ of truth inaccessible to the Understanding."—*Academy*, Sep. 22, 1877.

paper published in the *British Critic* in 1839, reckons him one of its precursors, as "providing a philosophical basis for it, as instilling a higher philosophy into inquiring minds than they had hitherto been accustomed to accept." The action of this great thinker's doctrine was, indeed, to a large extent, indirect. It is through the poetry of his friend and disciple Wordsworth, that his metaphysics, stripped of its technicalities, and presented in a popular form, has won the widest acceptance and exercised the deepest influence. "I wish to be considered a teacher or nothing," Wordsworth wrote to his friend, Sir George Beaumont. His age had need of his teaching, bewitched as it was by the Circean strains of Byron's morbid egotism, and the irresistible charm of the splendid verse in which Shelley clothed his passionate dreams, soaring like his own skylark away from this working-day world until he is lost in the clouds of his ecstatic idealisations. How many felt in Wordsworth's own generation, how many more have felt since, the healing influence of his poetry, as of Nature herself!

> As snow those inward pleadings fall,
> As soft, as bright, as pure, as cool,
> With gentle weight and gradual,
> And sink into the feverish soul.[1]

"I have not written for superficial observers

[1] I trust Cardinal Newman will pardon the application here made of these lines from his magnificent religious poem, *St. Philip in his God.*

and unthinking minds," the poet explained to his friend. But from the first he drew to him the more thoughtful and true-hearted of his age, "non solum dulcissimæ poeseos, verum etiam divinæ veritatis antistes:"[1] and among those who were most deeply influenced by him was John Keble.

The *Christian Year*, which appeared in 1827, marks an epoch in the religious history of the century. Cardinal Newman, writing of it nineteen years later, and looking back upon it and its influence from an external point of view, observes—

> Much certainly came of the *Christian Year*. . . . . Coming from one who had such claims on his readers, from the weight of his name, the depth of his devotional and ethical tone, and the special gift of consolation of which his poems were the evidence, it wrought a great work in the Establishment. It kindled hearts towards his Church; it gave something for the gentle and forlorn to cling to; it raised up advocates for it among those who, if God and their good angel had suffered it, might have wandered away into some sort of philosophy and acknowledged no Church at all.[2]

It did all this, certainly, and there can be no question that it acted as a powerful instrument in drawing together those who subsequently constituted the Tractarian party. It is, however, very difficult for men of the present generation to under-

[1] Dedication to William Wordsworth—"viro vere philosopho et vati sacro"—of Keble's *Prælectiones Academicæ*.

[2] *Essays Critical and Historical*, vol. ii. p. 245.

stand the sort of influence exercised by this volume of devotional poetry, when it first appeared more than half a century ago. It is not hard to account for its popularity; but it is hard to conceive now how it could have been an important factor in a great movement of religious thought. Judged coldly and by the ordinary canons of criticism the book may be justly praised for delicacy and refinement of style, for smoothness and harmony of numbers, for correctness of taste, for a sweet and gentle mysticism and a kind of natural sacramentalism. But there is no trace of the fine frenzy which, according to the Aristotelian dictum, is the chief note of high poetic inspiration. Nor do we find in it the keenness of vision, the intensity of feeling, the passion of appeal by which the souls of men are wont to be kindled, and which we are led to look for in compositions playing an important part in a religious revival. If we compare Mr. Keble with the poets of the previous century, whose hymns were such a living power, it must be allowed that, though he never sinks to their lowest level, he certainly never rises to their highest. There is nothing in the *Christian Year* which for grandeur of conception, splendour and fire of diction, natural freedom, easy grace, and strong upwelling of religious emotion, can be ranked with some of Charles Wesley's best verses: verses which perhaps have more in common with the masterpieces of Adam of St. Victor, and St. Bernard, than any

other in our language. Indeed John Keble's professed purpose was to exhibit the soothing tendency of the Prayer Book, and that this purpose was accomplished with rare skill and beauty, who can doubt? The curious thing is that the volume achieved so much beyond what its author aimed at; and that this was so is an emphatic testimony to the needs of the age in which he wrote. The high and dry school had little to offer in satisfaction of spiritual aspirations. In place of living bread—*panis vivus et vitalis*—it had nothing to set before the hungry soul but the stone of theological petrifactions. Evangelicalism was in its decadence. It was perishing of intellectual inanition. Beginning, in Apostolic wise, with "the foolishness of preaching," it had ended unapostolically in the preaching of foolishness. Its divinity was confined to a few isolated dogmas, which, torn from their place in systematic theology, had no enduring principle of life. For scholarship it had unctuous pulpit platitudes; for philosophy, the *deliramenta* of apocalyptic tea-tables. From art it turned away with comminatory references to "texts" in Exodus and Leviticus. To those who like John Henry Newman had made trial of it, and had found it wanting, and to those who like Hurrell Froude had never been drawn by it from conventional orthodoxy, the *Christian Year* came as "a new music, the music of a school long unknown in England, when the general tone of

religious literature was so nerveless and impotent."[1] Cardinal Newman judges that the two main intellectual truths which it brought home to him were the principle of sacramentalism and the doctrine as to certitude which he had already learned from Butler.

Such was the influence of the *Christian Year*. Cardinal Newman reckons it the original bond of those who were to become the leaders of the Oxford movement, the formal start of which he dates from Mr. Keble's once famous discourse on National Apostacy, preached at St. Mary's in 1833. It was in that year that Cardinal Newman began, "out of his own head," the series of papers from which the movement received its truest and most characteristic name of Tractarian. There can be no room for doubt that its chief springs of action are to be found in the *Tracts for the Times*, and in those *Oxford Sermons*, which, as their recent editor says, produced "a living effect" upon their hearers. The importance of the part played in the movement by Cardinal Newman admits of an easy test. Is it possible to conceive of it without him? We can conceive of it without the two Kebles, without Isaac Williams, without Dr. Pusey, who did not join it until 1836. They are, if we may so speak, of its accidents; Cardinal Newman is of its essence. It grew, indeed, out of the occult sympathies of

[1] *Apologia*, p. 18.

kindred minds, and was the issue of manifold causes, long working according to their own laws. But the objective form which it assumed was due, principally, to Cardinal Newman's supreme confidence, irresistible earnestness, absolute fearlessness, and to the unique personal influence which accompanied, and in part sprang from, these endowments. The specific danger, as it was judged, which supplied the occasion for its initiation was the Bill for the suppression of certain Irish Bishoprics. But this measure was an occasion merely. To Cardinal Newman, since at the age of fourteen he first looked into Voltaire and Hume, the primary fact of the age had been what he denominates Liberalism, by which term, as he explained upon a memorable occasion, he means "the doctrine that there is no positive truth in religion, but that one creed is as good as another."[1] To this he sought to oppose the principle of dogma—from the first until now the basis of his religion. He endeavoured to meet the new spirit with a definite religious teaching as to a visible Church, the kingdom in this world of a present though invisible King, a great supernatural fact among men, represented in this country by the Anglican establishment, and speaking through its formularies and the living voice of its episcopate, and to him, as to each man

[1] See his address delivered in the Palazzo della Pigna, upon the reception of the *biglietto* announcing his elevation to the Cardinalate.

in particular, through his own bishop, to whom he looked up as "the successor of the Apostles, the Vicar of Christ."[1] And so he tells us—

> [The Oxford] movement started on the ground of maintaining ecclesiastical authority, as opposed to the Erastianism of the State. It exhibited the Church as the one earthly object of religious loyalty and veneration, the source of all spiritual power and jurisdiction, and the channel of all grace. It represented it to be the interest, as well as the duty, of Churchmen, the bond of peace and the secret of strength, to submit their judgment in all things to her decision. And it taught that this divinely founded Church was realised and brought into effect, in our country, in the National Establishment, which was the outward form or development of a continuous dynasty and hereditary power which descended from the Apostles. It gave, then to that Establishment, in its officers, its laws, its usages, and its worship, that devotion and obedience which are correlative to the very idea of the Church. It set up on high the bench of Bishops and the Book of Common Prayer as the authority to which it was itself to bow, with which it was to cow and overpower an Erastian State.[2]

Such, according to Cardinal Newman, was the "clear, unvarying line of thought" upon which the movement of 1833 proceeded, and a careful study of the documents in which its history is to be traced amply confirms, if confirmation is wanted, the correctness of this view. The progress of Tractarianism, from *Tract* 1 to *Tract* 90, was the natural growth, the logical development, of the idea of submission to ecclesiastical authority. It was a progress leading ever further from the historical position, the first principles, of the Church of

[1] *Apologia*, p. 51. [2] *Anglican Difficulties*, vol. i. p. 130.

England, as by law established. The enterprise in which the Tractarians were engaged was, unconsciously to themselves, an attempt to transform the character of the Anglican communion, to undo the work of the Reformation, to reverse the traditions of three centuries. "Unconsciously to themselves," indeed. Nor need we wonder at their unconsciousness. It is, as Clough asks—

> What do we see? Each man a space
> Of some few yards before his face.

No man may see more. "If we would ascertain the real course of a principle, we must look at it at a certain distance and as history represents it to us."[1] But who can project himself into times to come, and survey the present from the standpoint of the future? The Tractarians were as men who had launched upon unknown seas, full of strange tides and secret currents, which swiftly and imperceptibly bore them away, baffling their vain attempts at steerage. Others, however, could see more clearly than was possible to them the direction in which they were drifting. Even so early as the year 1836 Cardinal Newman says, "a cry was heard on all sides of us, that the Tracts and the writings of the Fathers would lead us to become Catholics, before we were aware of it."[2] It was then that he set about a defence of the movement and its principles, and produced his treatise upon

[1] *Apologia*, p. 263. [2] *Ibid.* p. 63

The Prophetical Office of the Church, viewed relatively to Romanism and Popular Protestantism. This work appeared in 1837. Its subject was the *Via Media*, a designation "which had already been applied to the Anglican system by writers of repute. Its main object was to furnish an approximation in one or two points towards a correct theory of the duties and office of the Church Catholic." "If we deny that the Roman view of the Church is true," the author says, "we are bound in very shame to state what we hold ourselves." The *Lectures on the Prophetical Office* attempted to put forward such a statement. There was, however, an initial objection, which their author felt keenly, and stated in the Introduction to his work, with his habitual candour and peculiar power:—

> When we profess our *Via Media* as the very truth of the Apostles, we seem to bystanders to be mere antiquarians or pedants amusing ourselves with illusions or learned subtleties, and unable to grapple with things as they are. Protestantism and Popery are real religions. No one can doubt about them. They have furnished the mould in which nations have been cast, but the *Via Media*, viewed as an integral system, has never had existence, except on paper.

He grants the objection, although he endeavours to lessen it.

> It still remains to be tried whether what is called Anglo-Catholicism, the religion of Andrews, Laud, Hammond, Butler, and Wilson, is capable of being professed, acted on, and maintained on a

large sphere of action and through a sufficient period, or whether it be a new modification and transition state of Romanism or of popular Protestantism.

The trial was made, and we know with what results. In these Lectures on the Prophetical Office the case stated is put with marvellous dialectic skill and great persuasive power; but the logic of facts is stronger than the strongest logic of words. And facts were against the *Via Media*, the facts both of antiquity and of modern times. Its author had taken the historical foundation for granted.[1] It was an unfortunate assumption. The national feeling did but assert, with whatever passion and prejudice, the testimony of the national history—of which, indeed, that feeling is to a large extent the outcome—against the ethos of the movement, as alien from the established religion. It was nothing to the purpose to show that the views put forward by the Tractarians, with ever-increasing boldness, might be paralleled, one from this Anglican authority, another from that. It was not pretended that any accredited writer of the Establishment had ever ventured to hold such a body of doctrine as was at last set forth in *Tract* 90. The essentially Protestant mind of the country was shocked at the attribution of a theology practically indistinguish-

[1] Preface to the third edition, p. xxiii. In the *Apologia*, pp. 114-120, and p. 139, Cardinal Newman tells us of his dismay when ancient ecclesiastical history disclosed to him veritable examples of a *Via Media* in the Monophysite and Arian heresies. See also the *Twelfth Lecture on Anglican Difficulties*.

able from the Tridentine, to a Church whose time-honoured boast was (as South had declared) that "it alone made Protestantism considerable in Europe." Such was the ultimate resolution of the idea—dogmatic, sacerdotal, hierarchical—of the movement of 1833. To this goal had it conducted its authors. *Tract* 90 was received throughout the country with a storm of indignation, and the living rulers of the Establishment began to move. "These are they," Cardinal Newman says, "who reverse the Roman's maxim, and are wont to shrink from the contumacious, and to be valiant towards the submissive."[1] This little touch of bitterness is not unnatural, but, *pace tanti viri*, I venture to say that Anglican bishops seem to have acted towards Tractarianism with much long-suffering, and in the event to have condemned it only when the primary obligation of fidelity to themselves compelled them to do so. Excellent men, but not heroic; respectable, but not sacerdotal; solidly adhering to things settled, and, in Mr. Carlyle's phrase, mainly occupied in burning their own smoke—what sympathy could they have had with such a movement? Indeed *Tract* 1, in which the author declared that he "could not wish them a more blessed termination of their course than the spoiling of their goods and martyrdom," might reasonably have distressed and alarmed them. But for years they bore and for-

[1] "Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos." *Anglican Difficulties* vol. i. p. 152.

bore; it was difficult to be hard upon men who assured them that they were "Apostles true." And when at length they acted, in obedience to strong popular pressure, surely no action could have been milder. Contrast it with any conceivable action by Catholic bishops in respect of a Protestantising movement within the communion of Rome. Still, in the event, they did undoubtedly pronounce against *Tract* 90 in a series of charges lasting through three years. "It was a formal, determinate movement;" Cardinal Newman says: "I recognised it as a condemnation. It was the only one that was in their power."[1] It was the beginning of the end. To the adverse verdict of public opinion, to the censure of academical boards, he might have been comparatively indifferent. He had not entered upon his course to be turned aside from it *arbitrio popularis auræ*, or to quail before the *ardor civium prava jubentium*. But the condemnation of the episcopate was a fatal blow to the Tractarian party. Its leaders felt, Cardinal Newman tells us, that "their occupation was gone. Their initial principle, their basis, external authority, was cut away from under their feet. They had set their fortunes upon a cast, and they had lost." "Henceforward they had nothing left but to shut up their school and retire into the country, ... unless, indeed, they took up some other theory, unless they changed their

[1] *Apologia*, p. 139.

ground, unless they strangely forgot their own luminous and most keen convictions," "ceased to be what they were, and became what they were not," or, "looked out for truth and peace elsewhere."[1] These were, indeed, the three courses open to the adherents of the movement, and some followed one of them, some another. There were those who, withdrawing from a world not moving to their mind, to the seclusion of rural parishes, sought there to reap the reward of "toil unsevered from tranquillity," in the beneficent activity of an English clergyman's life and the soothing influences of his home. Many "vindicated the right of private judgment," modified their views, and cast in their lot with other sections of religious thought. No inconsiderable number, after more or fewer years of anxiety and suspense, determined that the Church of Rome was the true home of the theological idea which they could not surrender. Of these was John Henry Newman. It is unnecessary to dwell here upon the workings of his mind which led him to this conclusion. They may be followed, step by step, in the *Apologia* and the *Essay on Development*. It was on September the 25th, 1845, that his last words as an Anglican clergyman were spoken to the little knot of friends assembled in the chapel of his house at Littlemore to keep with him the anniversary of its consecration. There were few dry eyes there save the preacher's, as, from the text which

[1] *Anglican Difficulties*, vol. i. p. 153.

had been that of his first sermon twenty-one years before, he spoke to them of "the parting of friends." "Man goeth forth to his work and to his labour until the evening." His sun was set, and even had come. They knew well what he meant when, in the sacred language which "veils our feelings while it gives expression to them," he bade them keep the feast, "even though in haste and with bitter herbs, and with loins girded and with staff in hand, as they who have no continuing city, but seek one to come."

The late Earl Russell once spoke of Cardinal Newman's secession from the Church of England as an inexplicable event. It is difficult to understand how any one can desire a clearer explanation than that which Cardinal Newman himself has given of it—an explanation which seems to be of quite a convincing candour and cogency. His logical consistency appears to be as much beyond cavil as his perfect sincerity. He started with the assumption that the system finally developed in *Tract* 90 was the true system of the Anglican communion. Of that system submission to ecclesiastical authority was the keystone. And when the adverse sentence of such authority proceeded against him he was true to his principles, he accepted it,[1] although it

[1] In 1843, he wrote to Archdeacon Manning, "If there ever was a case, in which an individual teacher has been put aside and

was to him as the bitterness of death. Never was his loyalty to the Church of England more conspicuously manifested than in the supreme hour when he left her, "parting with all that his heart loved, and turning his face to a strange land." At the time indeed, few, very few, could understand this; and their calmer voices were drowned in the prevailing ululation. The secession, at last, of such a man, for years an object of ever-increasing suspicion and distrust, shocked the public mind of that day in a way that can now be hardly realised, and confused the judgments even of the wise. There is nothing which men in general resent so deeply as an action which tends to unsettle their opinions. The utterances of indignation and disgust are seldom weighed with nice discrimination, and an accusation of deceit is the shape in which popular anger most readily finds vent. It was natural that the cry of treachery should go up; but the cry was as ill-founded as it was natural. If John Henry Newman, and his friends who shared his deep ineradicable convictions, instead of betaking themselves whither those convictions logically led and could honestly be held, had retained their places in a communion with whose fundamental positions they were at variance, the accusation of treachery would

virtually put away by a community, mine is one . . . It is felt—I am far from from denying, justly felt—that I am a foreign material, and cannot assimilate with the Church of England."—*Apologia*, p. 220.

have admitted of no extenuation upon the ground of popular prejudice or the excitement of the hour. To remain in the Church of England, as by law established, while ostentatiously defying that law; to revile and browbeat ecclesiastical rulers, while professing to reverence them as divinely appointed; to introduce stealthily the dogmas and the ritual of Rome in a great national institution, whose history, whose formularies, whose Articles of Religion, are a standing protest against Rome; to convulse and bring to the verge of destruction the Anglican spiritual edifice, while bearing its name and eating its bread—such would have been, in truth, the conduct of traitors. But no one who knows Cardinal Newman, even if such knowledge is derived merely from his writings, can conceive of him as lending the sanction of his unstained character, his clear and disciplined mind, his elevated and elevating personal influence, to a policy of this kind, a policy intellectually as contemptible as it is morally flagitious. Indeed, he has himself told us how such a course was regarded by him.

I can understand, I can sympathise with those old-world thinkers whose commentators are Mant and D'Oyly, whose theologian is Tomlin, whose ritualist is Wheatley, and whose canonist is Burns. . . . In these days three hundred years is a respectable antiquity, and traditions recognised in law-courts, and built into the structure of society, may well without violence be imagined to be immemorial. Those also I can understand who take their stand upon the Prayer-book; or those who honestly profess to follow the consensus of Anglican divines, as the voice of authority and the

standard of faith. Moreover I can quite enter into the sentiment with which members of the liberal and infidel school investigate the history and the documents of the early Church. They profess a view of Christianity truer than the world has ever had; nor on the assumption of their principles is there anything shocking to good sense in this profession. . . . Free-thinkers and broad-thinkers, Laudians and Prayer-book Christians, high-and-dry and Establishment men, all these [I] understand; but what [I] feel so prodigious is this . . . that such as you . . . should come forth into open day with your new edition of the Catholic faith, different from that held in any existing body of Christians anywhere, which not half a dozen men all over the world would honour with their *imprimatur*; and then withal should be as positive about its truth in every part, as if the voice of mankind were with you instead of being against you. . . . You do not follow the Bishops of the National Church; you disown its existing traditions; you are discontented with its divines; you protest against its law-courts; you shrink from its laity; you outstrip its Prayer-book. You have in all respects an eclectic or original religion of your own. . . . Nearly all your divines, if not all, call themselves Protestants, and you anathematise the name. Who makes the concessions to Catholics that you do, yet remain separate from them? Who among Anglican authorities would speak of Penance as a Sacrament, as you do? Who of them encourages, much less insists upon, auricular confession, as you do? Or makes fasting an obligation? Or uses the crucifix and the rosary? Or reserves the consecrated bread? Or believes in miracles as existing in your communion? Or administers, as I believe you do, Extreme Unction? In some points you prefer Rome, in others Greece, in others England, in others Scotland; and of that preference your own private judgment is the ultimate sanction. What am I to say in answer to conduct so preposterous? Say you go by any authority whatever, and I shall know where to find you and I shall respect you. Swear by any school of religion, old or modern, by Ronge's Church, or by the Evangelical Alliance, nay, by yourselves, and I shall know what you mean, and will listen to you. But do not come to me with the latest fashion of opinion the world has seen, and protest to me that it is the oldest. Do not come to me at this

time of day with views palpably new, isolated, original, *sui generis*, warranted old neither by Christian nor unbeliever, and challenge me to answer what I really have not the patience to read. Life is not long enough for such trifles. . . . The basis of [the Tractarian] party was the professed abnegation of private judgment: your basis is the professed exercise of it.[1]"

John Henry Newman's secession from the Church of England may, then, justly be regarded as the supreme proof of his good faith. It must not, however, be forgotten that it has another bearing. It was also the seal of the good faith of his opponents. Perhaps the most influential of these —certainly from the historical point of view the most considerable — was Thomas Arnold. And, widely as their views differed, fierce as was the polemical strife between them, profound as was the conviction of each as to the appalling mischief inherent in the system of the other, we may, at this distance of time, place their names together as among the noblest and best adorning the annals of our country in the nineteeth century. In subtleness of intellect, in dialectical skill, in imaginative cogency, Dr. Arnold must indeed be judged far inferior to his great opponent. As a distinguished French critic has observed: "His talent was not, perhaps, upon the same level with his character; it was his character which inspired his talent," and was the source of his "extraordinary ascendancy over his pupils."[2] Passionate alike in his hatred

[1] *Anglican Difficulties*, vol. i. pp. 155-163.

[2] Scherer, *Mélanges d'Histoire Religieuse*, pp. 219, 220.

of ecclesiasticism and in his love of truth, it was not to theology and history, but to his moral sympathies, that he looked for light to guide him in his spiritual and intellectual difficulties. The theory in which he so earnestly believed, and in the name of which he taught—a theory of a Christian state with the politics of Aristotle and the ethics of St. Paul—was as purely a paper theory as the *Via Media* which he so detested, and has as utterly passed away. This theory has much in common with that of Hooker; but it was from Samuel Taylor Coleridge that Arnold derived it in greatest measure. It is a curious testimony to the many-sided genius of that great thinker, that his doctrine, while providing, as Cardinal Newman tells us, "a philosophical basis" to the Tractarian movement, should also have supplied the inspiration, and furnished the arms, which were to have so large a share in bringing about its overthrow.

The Tractarian party was defeated then, and crumbled into dissolution. Its leader and its most consistent adherents went out of the National Church, because, in truth, they were not of it. The house, which they had reared so laboriously, was built upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon

that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it. The practical results of Tractarianism have, however, been of the highest importance. Let me now go on to indicate a few of the more obvious of them.

And first, as to the Church of England. The Tractarians thought they had failed: and so they had as to the main object which they had at heart. But, as so often happens in the affairs of men, while not accomplishing what they intended, they accomplished much that they did not intend. The Oxford movement, discredited in its system, lived on in its sentiment. *Tract* 90, which most truly represents its dogmatic teaching, has been forgotten except as a document of history, or a curiosity of literature. It is far otherwise with the various volumes which embody its feeling, practical or emotional. The *Christian Year* has become a household book. Next to the Bible and Prayer-book it is the most popular religious work in England, and wherever English religion has followed the English flag. Cardinal Newman's *Oxford Sermons*, as Mr. Copeland has truly said, "have acted like leaven on the mind, and language, and literature of the Church in this country."[1] A treasury of all that is delicate and tender in the religious spirit, they are, and are long likely to be, the chosen devotional reading of thousands, who are profoundly indifferent, or actually opposed, to the author's doctrinal views. It is not

[1] Preface to the New Edition, p. 7.

too much to say that Tractarianism has done for the national religion of England, a work similar to that which *Le Génie du Christianisme* did, some years before, for the national religion of France. It has produced an intelligent and sympathetic study of the art, the institutions, the spiritual history of the past; it has engendered a revival of external reverence in public worship; it has aroused a deep sense of the sanctity of common life; it has created a spiritualistic school in striking contrast with the dull, dreary, depressing pietism which, up to the date when it arose, presented the only outlet in the Establishment for devout aspirations and mystical affections. It has cleansed our ancient cathedrals and churches from the squalor of centuries, and has clothed them in some semblance of their pristine magnificence; it has erected new religious edifices throughout the land, some hardly inferior in beauty of construction and splendour of decoration to the works of medieval piety. All this, and much more which should be added to make the picture complete, and which each reader may supply for himself, is in large measure due to the movement originated by John Henry Newman. Thus even now, he is no mere name of the past in the Church of England, but a present power, working, and long to work; how fruitfully no man can judge.

And if we turn to the Catholic Church, the influence of Tractarianism has been, at the least, as

important there, as in the Anglican establishment. Perhaps, it is not too much to say, that to it, in large measure, is due all that most signally distinguishes the present position of Catholics in this country, from that which they occupied half a century ago. No doubt, the Act of Emancipation rendered possible the change which has come about. But the Catholic body in England, in 1829, when the Act was passed, was hardly in a condition to profit, to any large extent, by that great measure of justice. Far be it from me to write one word sounding in disparagement of men for whom I entertain a reverential admiration which no words can adequately express. Who indeed can but revere and admire the indefectible fidelity of that heroic band of hereditary confessors? No Englishman, surely, can fail to be touched by it. But I suppose it is an unquestionable fact of history that the political, educational, and social disabilities of centuries had told disastrously upon the Catholics of England. How could it have been otherwise? For generations they had dwelt in darkness and in the shadow of death, and the iron had entered into their souls. *Sine adjutorio, inter mortuos liber, sicut vulnerati dormientes in sepulchris*, is the true description of the state in which they found themselves when they were once more admitted to their constitutional rights. It was opportune, then, that the fresher zeal, the wider cultivation, the uncramped energies of the band of

proselytes whom Cardinal Newman headed, were placed, just when they were, at the service of Catholicity in England. The new blood brought into the Catholic communion is certainly a very important result of the Tractarian Movement; and its importance is not restricted either to the geographical limits of this country, or to the chronological limits of this age. Still I do not think I am hazarding a doubtful prediction in saying that, in the long run, the most considerable product of Tractarianism, so far as the Catholic Church is concerned, will be found to be her gain of John Henry Newman, her acquisition of this one mind—a mind upon a level with that of Pascal or Bossuet, and uniting to much which was highest and best in both, great endowments that were given to neither. It is very difficult, however, to set down in writing anything that will convey a just impression of the work which Cardinal Newman has done, and is doing, for the Church with which he cast in his lot nearly half a century ago. The works which he has published since his secession, great as their effect has already been, represent only a small portion of it. From his retreat at Birmingham has gone forth through the Catholic world the same subtle influence which once went forth from Oriel and Littlemore, an influence profoundly affecting events, not in their more vulgar manifestations which meet the eye, but in their secret springs and prime sources. To others he left conspicuous positions and

The loud applause and aves vehement

which have greeted their achievements there, himself taking unquestioningly that lowest place which his ecclesiastical superiors assigned him, going forth, as of old, to his work and to his labour in his appointed sphere; and at last, in the "calm sunset of his various day," as unquestioningly obeying the voice of authority bidding him go up higher, and setting him among the princes of his people. His life, since he joined the communion of Rome, has been to a great extent "a hidden life"; a life of religious retirement and abstraction, not indeed from the world's thought and great interests, but from its selfish striving and low desires; that life, as some one has described it, *à la fois en nous et hors de nous*, which is perhaps the most favourable to the development of high spiritual and intellectual gifts. So far as its external surroundings are concerned, it has been spent among a strange people; a population given up to grimy industrialism, to "the dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion," and possessing little in common with the visitant who had exchanged the learned leisure and antique beauty of Oxford for the "fumum et opes strepitumque" of their modern and unlovely town. There has he passed from mature manhood to green old age, and there he trusts it will be permitted him to die. Thence has gone out his sound into all lands. A simple priest, holding no position of authority, living tranquilly with his brethren, his utterances have sunk into

the thinking minds of his communion, throughout the world, as those of no other member of his Church. Not one of his words has fallen to the ground. This must be duly pondered in judging of his life as a Catholic.

> Not on the vulgar mass
> Called "work" must sentence pass,
> Things done that took the eye and had the price;
> O'er which, from level stand,
> The low world laid its hand,
> Found straightway to its mind,
> Could value in a trice;
> But all the world's coarse thumb
> And finger failed to plumb,
> So passed in making up the main account:

all that must be duly reckoned when the time comes to speak fully of his action in the Catholic Church. For the time is not come yet. That history must be left to a future day, when his is done and he is at rest. The world knows enough, however, to trace its main lines, to discern its dominant ideas, to appreciate its general significance. His later writings tell us much; like his earlier, they are true revelations of himself; from some points of view, indeed, truer, for in them we have the ultimate resolution of his philosophical and theological opinions, and the mature development of his literary gifts. Thus the *Grammar of Assent* is the full expansion and orderly arrangement of the philosophic system first set forth in his *Sermons before the University of Oxford.* His *Discourses to*

Mixed Congregations, and *Upon Various Occasions*, certainly surpass in intensity of power any of his former productions, whether in pages of appalling description which recall the *via terribile* of Michael Angelo, or in passages of more than earthly beauty and sweetness, which seem like a translation into words of a picture of Fra Angelico. I am here concerned with them, however, merely as documents of history, as notes and memorials of his work, as serving to shadow forth, however faintly, the more public side of his activity as a Catholic.

That activity has been to a large extent of a controversial kind. Cardinal Newman would gladly have had it otherwise. His ideal of existence would rather have been "to behold the bright countenance of truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies." But for him, as for Milton, it was not so ordered. His course has lain "in a troubled sea of noises and hoarse disputes," and in that rough element his endeavour has ever been to do, with all his might, the duty which lay nearest to him. And, when he had himself embraced Catholicism, he felt that his first duty was towards those whom he had left behind. His heart yearned towards his brethren. They had gone one mile with him: he would compel them to go twain. That upon their own principles they ought to follow him, is the scope of most of his earlier Catholic sermons, and of those *Lectures on Anglican Difficulties*, originally delivered in

London in 1850, which created so great an impression at the time, and which, as years have gone on, have exercised an ever increasing influence. It does not fall within my present scope to examine in detail the arguments which he there employs. But I may remark, generally, that the effect of his writings upon what is called the Anglican controversy has been to place it upon quite another footing from that on which it formerly stood, and to lift it into a higher sphere. He puts aside, as in the question of Anglican orders, dreary gropings into minute intricate passages and obscure corners of past occurrences, as unsatisfactory except to antiquaries, who delight in researches into the past for their own sake,[1] and brings you face to face with "broad visible facts," with great manifest historical phenomena. Thus, if he is treating "De Ecclesia," he inquires what the true logical idea of a Church is, and what is that idea as it has actually lived and worked, as it has from the first been apprehended by saints and doctors, and received by the *orbis terrarum*. And he draws it out in its particulars, as a divine creation, a supernatural order in the world, appealing to the human conscience, as the natural order appeals to the human senses, the City of God tabernacling among men, the Living Oracle of God in the earth, the inerrant Judge of Faith and Morals until the consummation

[1] See "Letter to Father Coleridge" in *Essays Critical and Historical*, vol. ii. p. 109.

of all things, gathering, in each successive generation, the elect into a polity in belief of the truth, at once a philosophy, and a religious rite, and a political power, as its Divine Author is Prophet, Priest, and King. And then, he asks, can any man believe the Church of England to be this, or in any true sense, to represent it? Not that he is insensible to so much that is excellent and winning in Anglicanism.

> Its portions of Catholic teachings, its "decency and order," the pure and beautiful English of its prayers, its literature, the piety found among its members, the influence of superiors and friends, its historical associations, its domestic character, the charm of a country life, the remembrance of past years, there is all this and much more to attach the mind to the national worship. But attachment is not trust, nor is to obey the same as to look up to, and to rely upon; nor do I think that any thoughtful or educated man can simply believe in the *word* of the Established Church. I never met any such person who did, or said he did, and I do not think that such a person is possible.[1]

The whole matter, as he judges of it, turns upon the question whether there is in the world such a thing as a Church, in the true sense of the word. Throughout his long career the deep underlying convictions which have guided him have been unchanged. Not only is it true of him that "his wandering step" was ever "obedient to high thoughts," but it is also true that the thoughts have always been, in substance, the same. As an Anglican, his battle was on behalf of the dogmatic

[1] *Discourses to Mixed Congregations*, p. 232

principle. As a Catholic, he has carried on the same battle, under different conditions. He quitted the Church of England when he became convinced that it was in no true sense dogmatic, but, as he has himself expressed it, merely "a civil establishment daubed with divinity."[1] And he says in another place:—

> There came on me an extreme astonishment that I had ever imagined it to be a portion of the Catholic Church . . . . Forthwith I could not get myself to see in it anything else than . . . . a mere national institution. As if my eyes were suddenly opened, so I saw it—spontaneously, apart from any definite act of reason or any argument; and so I have seen it ever since . . . . I gazed at [the Catholic Church] almost passively—as a great objective fact. I looked at her; at her rites, her ceremonial, and her precepts; and I said, "This *is* a religion:" and then when I looked back upon the poor Anglican Church, for which I had laboured so hard, and upon all that appertained to it, and thought of our various attempts to dress it up doctrinally and esthetically, it seemed to me to be the veriest of nonentities."[2]

This is the main thesis of Cardinal Newman's earlier Catholic sermons and of his *Lectures on Anglican Difficulties;*—that the Church of England is not an oracle of religious truth, that Rome is the natural, logical, and true home of the idea of Tractarianism. And the course of events in the Anglican communion has been such as to add much point to his argument. The defeat of Tractarianism was the victory of Liberalism, and Liberalism has reaped the full fruits of its triumph. One judgment

[1] *Via Media*, vol. i. p. 339, note of 1877.

[2] *Apologia*, p. 340.

after another of the Supreme Appellate Court of the Established Church has deprived it of any semblance of dogmatic character which it may once have possessed, and has reduced it to the position of an exponent of the most conflicting opinions on theological subjects. If Bishop Watson has rightly defined Protestantism to be "the right of saying what you think, and of thinking what you please," the Church of England, unquestionably, is the most Protestant of ecclesiastical communities.

So much must suffice with regard to Cardinal Newman's action in the Anglican controversy. It is, as I have observed, a continuation of that championship of the dogmatic principle which distinguished him as a Protestant. And the same may be said of the course which he has taken with regard to controversies among Catholics. While he has strenuously combated, on the one hand, the Liberalism which strikes at the root of the dogmatic principle, he has, on the other, been an equally uncompromising opponent of those who, as he judged, sought to overlay the Catholic creed with private interpretation, and to impose their unauthorised shibboleths as authoritative teaching—to impress upon the œcumenical attributes of the Church a partisan character. The doctrines defined of late years, which are popularly supposed to be the greatest stumbling-blocks, never, in themselves, presented any difficulties to him, as a Catholic. The promulgation of the dogma of the Immaculate

Conception was hailed by him in a passage not surpassed, perhaps, in any of his writings, for "tender grace" and splendour of diction.[1] And the need which he held to exist, before he joined the communion of Rome, for "an infallible chair" to judge in controversies of faith, supplied one of the arguments which attracted him towards it.[2] But doctrinal teaching is one thing; the tone and temper of religious factions are quite another.

From the day I became a Catholic, [he writes in 1875,] to this day, now close upon thirty years, I have never had a moment's misgiving that the Communion of Rome is that Church which the Apostles set up at Pentecost. . . . Nor have I ever for a moment hesitated in my conviction, since 1845, that it was my clear duty to join that Catholic Church, as I did then join it, when in my conscience I felt it to be divine. . . . Never for a moment have I wished myself back. But, [he adds,] I had more to try and afflict me, in various ways, as a Catholic than as an Anglican.[3]

Nor is the world ignorant as to the causes of these trials and afflictions, in part at least. He has himself told us that there were those whose proceedings upon the occasion of the Vatican Council shocked and dismayed him. Himself holding the infallibility of the Pope, as a matter of

[1] In his sermon on the "Glories of Mary," *Discourses to Mixed Congregations*, p. 359. See also the sermon on the "Fitness of the Glories of Mary" (No. XVIII.), and the "Letter to Dr. Pusey" in Vol. II. of *Anglican Difficulties*.

[2] See *Essay on Development*, chap. ii. sec. 2. p. 90.

[3] "Letter to the Duke of Norfolk," Postcript, *Anglican Difficulties*, vol. ii. p. 349.

theological opinion, ever since he had become a Catholic,[1] but, doubting the opportuneness of its definition, he stood aghast at the virulence displayed by a small and extreme section among the advocates of the dominant party. It was a party not dominant which commended itself to his judgment and instincts, not only in theology but also in politics; for the old Laudian notion of the indefeasible divine right of hereditary rulers, and of the absolute passive obedience due to them, had dropped away from him, and had been replaced by the broader doctrine of Aquinas and Suarez. The party of which I speak called itself Liberal. He did not like the name, but he recognised the fact that between the Liberalism against which he has ever warred and the Liberty for which Montalembert and Lacordaire so earnestly contended, there was nothing in common but a sound. With the "general line of thought and conduct" of those illustrious men he "enthusiastically concurred,"[2] and he resented as an outrage the invectives with which they and those who thought with them were so persistently pursued:

> I felt deeply, he writes, and shall ever feel while life lasts, the violence and cruelty of journals and other publications which, while taking, as they professed to do, the Catholic side, employed

1 "Letter to the Duke of Norfolk," *Anglican Difficulties*, vol. ii. p. 304.

2 *Apologia*, p. 285.

themselves by their rash language (though, of course, they did not mean it) in unsettling the weak in faith, throwing back inquirers, and shocking the Protestant mind.[1]

Such language, indeed, has ever elicited his strong disapprobation. Thus in another place he observes:

There are those among us who for years past have conducted themselves as if no responsibility attached to wild words and overbearing deeds: who have stated truths in the most paradoxical form, and stretched principles until they were close upon snapping.[2] There has been a fierce and intolerant temper abroad which scorns and virtually tramples on the little ones of Christ. While I acknowledge one Pope, *jure divino*, I acknowledge no other, and I think it a usurpation too wicked to be comfortably dwelt upon when individuals use their own private judgment in the discussion of religious questions, not simply *abundare in suo sensu* but for the purpose of anathematizing the private judgment of others.[3]

This "jealous vindication, against tyrannous *ipse dixits*, of the range of truths and the sense of propositions, of which the absolute reception may be required," is among the most marked characteristics of his later writings, and nowhere, perhaps, has he more strongly displayed it than in dealing with a document so much and so ignorantly talked of, both by Catholics and Protestants, the *Syllabus Errorum*, issued by command of the late Pope in 1864. Before proceeding to his argument, that this cata-

1 "Letter to the Duke of Norfolk, *Anglican Difficulties*, vol. ii. p 300.

2 *Ibid.* p. 177.

3 *Ibid.* p. 346.

logue of errors has in itself no dogmatic force, that it is a mere index *raisonné*, the value of which lies in its references; that the aversion felt by educated Europe towards it arises mainly from misinterpretation of the theses condemned, from ignorance of the language of scientific theology, and, from the reading of the propositions apart from the context, occasion, and drift of each, he interposes words of indignant protest against "those who wish and try to carry measures, and declare they have carried, when they have not carried them"; and adds the caution, that Pontifical "utterances which are really dogmatic must be read by definite rules and by traditional principles of interpretation, which are as cogent and as unchangeable as the Pope's own decisions themselves." [1]

It is not necessary, however, for me to pursue this subject, and I gladly leave unstirred theological dust, now happily fallen, to glance at the bearing of the Tractarian Movement upon another question of far profounder and more general interest: the great question of the day, we must account it, lying as it does at the root of all philosophy: Is any knowledge of God possible?—any knowledge of His existence as a fact?—any knowledge of Him as a Person?—and, if so, how? I need hardly say that

[1] "Letter to the Duke of Norfolk," sec. 7. *Anglican Difficulties*, vol. ii. p. 280.

to present with any fulness the mind of the author of Tractarianism upon this matter would be an undertaking very far beyond my present limits, involving as it would, with much else, an exposition of his whole doctrine as to certitude and the logical cogency of faith. All I can pretend to do here is to indicate, as briefly as may be consistent with clearness, the outlines of one important branch of his argument; and I shall endeavour to do this, as far as possible, in his own words. His main principle is that which he originally learnt from Butler—that probability is the guide of life. Formal logical sequence, he observes—

> is not, in fact, the method by which we are enabled to become certain of what is concrete, and it is equally plain what the real and necessary method is. It is the cumulation of probabilities, independent of each other, arising out of the nature and circumstances of the particular case which is under review, probabilities too fine to avail separately, too subtle and circuitous to be convertible into syllogisms, too numerous and various for such conversion, even were they convertible.[1]

This, he says—

> is the mode in which we ordinarily reason, dealing with things directly and as they stand, one by one, in the concrete, with an intrinsic and personal power, not a conscious adoption of an artificial instrument or expedient.[2] From the nature of the case, and from the constitution of the human mind, certitude is the result of arguments which, taken in the letter, and not in their full implicit sense, are but probabilities.[3]

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[1] *Grammar of Assent*, p. 281. [2] *Ibid.* p. 324. [3] *Ibid.* p. 286.

And so, in religious inquiries, he holds informal inference to be the real and necessary method. By religion he means the knowledge of God, of His will, and of our duties towards Him; and he finds three main channels which Nature furnishes for acquiring this knowledge, viz. our own minds, the voice of mankind, and the course of the world, the most authoritative of these, as specially our own, being our own mind. To Cardinal Newman our great internal teacher of religion is conscience, a personal guide, which he must use because he must use himself, and nearer to him than any other means of knowledge.[1] He puts away abstract questions; he does not consider "how far external existences are in all cases necessary to the action of the mind, because, in fact, man does not live in isolation, but is everywhere found as a member of society." He deals with no *individuum vagum*, but with man as the experience of life presents him, and with the man he is best acquainted with—himself, because he knows what has satisfied and satisfies himself; if it satisfies him it is likely to satisfy others; if, as he believes and is sure, it is true, it will approve itself to others also, for there is but one truth.[2] Conscience, then, to him is the voice of God within, "teaching not only that He is, but what He is," "the special Attribute under which it brings Him before us, and to which it subordinates all other

[1] *Grammar of Assent*, p. 389. [2] *Ibid.* p. 385.

Attributes," being "that of justice—retributive justice."

Hence its effect is to burden and sadden the religious mind, and is in contrast with the enjoyment derivable from the exercise of the affections, and from the perception of beauty, whether in the material universe or in the creations of the intellect. This is that fearful antagonism brought out with such soul-piercing reality by Lucretius, when he speaks so dishonourably of what he considers the heavy yoke of religion, and the "æternas pœnas in morte timendum"; and, on the other hand, rejoices in his *Alma Venus*, "Quæ rerum naturam sola gubernas."[1]

He looks within, then, and he finds, as he believes, that the existence of a God of Judgment is as certain to him as his own existence, however difficult it may be to put into logical shape the grounds of that certainty. He looks into the world and there he sees a sight that "seems simply to give the lie to this great truth, of which his whole being is so full." "To consider the world," he writes—

in its length and breadth, its various history, the many races of man, their starts, their fortunes, their mutual alienation, their conflicts; and then their ways, habits, governments, forms of worship, their enterprises, their aimless courses, their random achievements and acquirements, the impotent conclusions of long-standing facts, the tokens so faint and broken of a superintending design, the blind evolution of what turn out to be great powers or truths, the progress of things, as if from unreasoning elements, not towards final causes, the greatness and littleness of man, his far-reaching aims, his short duration, the curtain hung over his futurity, the disappointments of life, the defeat of good, the success of evil, physical pain, mental anguish, the prevalence and intensity of sin,

[1] *Grammar of Assent*, p. 391.

the pervading idolatries, the corruptions, the dreary hopeless irreligion, that condition of the whole race, so fearfully yet exactly described in the Apostle's words, "Having no hope, and without God in the world,"—all this is a vision to dizzy and appal; and inflicts upon the mind the sense of a profound mystery which is absolutely beyond human solution. . . . Were it not for the voice speaking so clearly in my conscience and my heart, I should be an atheist, or a pantheist, or a polytheist, when I looked into the world."[1]

Thus does human life present itself to him. Such is the "heart-piercing, reason-bewildering fact" which he has to face. Is there any explanation of it? "I see only a choice of alternatives," he answers.

Either there is no Creator, or He has disowned His creatures. Are, then, the dim shadows of His Presence in the affairs of men but a fancy of our own, or, on the other hand, has He hid His face and the light of His countenance because we have in some special way dishonoured Him? My true informant, my burdened conscience, gives me at once the true answer to each of these antagonistic questions:—it pronounces without any misgiving that God exists:—and it pronounces quite as surely that I am alienated from Him; that "His hand is not shortened, but that our iniquities have divided between us and our God." Thus it solves the world's mystery, and sees in it only a confirmation of its own original teaching.[2]

This, then, is his first step. The presence of God in the conscience, and the sense of alienation from God, are to him the main truths of natural religion—the notorious facts of the case in the medium of his primary mental experiences. And here, before I pass on, I should remark, that, irre-

[1] *Apologia*, p. 241. [2] *Grammar of Assent*, p. 397.

sistibly as Cardinal Newman finds the doctrine of the existence of God borne in upon him, he must not be supposed to be without a keen consciousness of the number and weight of the objections which may be raised against it—of the insoluble questions, the inconceivable, inexplicable mysteries which attend it—of the imperfection and incompleteness of the body of proof adducible for it—of the plausible excuses which may be urged for doubting it.[1] He recognises that "the main difficulty to an inquirer is firmly to hold that there is a Living God, the Creator, Witness, and Judge of men." And he thinks that, when once the mind is broken-in "to the belief of a power above it, when once it understands that it is not itself the measure of all things in heaven and earth, it will have little difficulty in going forward:" not, indeed, that it necessarily must, but that it has passed a line—that "the great obstacle to faith is taken away."[2] The very difficulties of nature, he judges, make it likely that a Revelation should be given.

[1] See sermon on "Mysteries of Nature and Grace" in *Discourses to Mixed Congregations*, p. 263. So in *Oxford University Sermons*, p. 194, he remarks, "It is a great question whether Atheism is not as philosophically consistent with the phenomena of the *physical* world, *taken by themselves*, as the doctrine of a creative and sovereign Power." But see the note in the last edition upon the words in italics. It must not be supposed that Cardinal Newman denies the validity of the argument from design in its place.

[2] *Discourses to Mixed Congregations*, p. 276.

That earnest desire which religious minds cherish leads the way to the expectation of it. Those who know nothing of the wounds of the soul, are not led to deal with the question, or to consider its circumstances. But, when our attention is roused, then the more steadily we dwell upon it, the more probable does it seem that a revelation has been, or will be, given to us. This presentiment is founded on our sense, on the one hand, of the infinite goodness of God, and, on the other, of our extreme misery and need.[1] You know there is a God, yet you know your own ignorance of Him, of His will, of your duties, of your prospects. A revelation would be the greatest of possible boons which could be vouchsafed to you. After all, you do not know, you only conclude, that there is a God; you see Him not, you do but hear of Him. He acts under a veil; He is on the point of manifesting Himself to you at every turn, yet He does not. He has impressed on your heart anticipations of His majesty; in every part of creation has He left traces of His presence and given glimpses of His glory; you come up to the spot, He has been there, but He is gone. . . The news, then, of a revelation, far from suspicious, is borne in upon our hearts by the strongest presumptions of reasons in its behalf. It is hard to believe that it is not given, as, indeed, the conduct of mankind has ever shown. You cannot help expecting it from the hands of the All-merciful, unworthy as you feel yourselves of it. It is not that you can claim it, but that He inspires hope of it; it is not you that are worthy of the gift, but it is the gift which is worthy of your Creator. It is so urgently probable, that little evidence is required for it, even though but little were given. Evidence that God has spoken you must have, else were you a prey to impostures; but its extreme likelihood allows you, were it necessary, to dispense with all proof that is not barely sufficient for your purpose. The very fact, I say, that there is a Creator, and a hidden one, powerfully bears you on and sets you down at the very threshold of revelation, and leaves you there looking up earnestly for divine tokens that a revelation has been made.[2]

This is the second stage of his argument. His

[1] *Grammar of Assent*, p. 423.

[2] *Discourses to Mixed Congregations*, p. 277-279.

third point is, If there is a Revelation, where should we seek it? Christianity he considers to be the truest complement of natural religion.[1] But which of its innumerable varieties is the truest form of Christianity? And here comes in the testimony of history. Christianity is a great fact in the world. Its founders set it up as a Church, a Visible Society, a Kingdom. This was their work, not to write a book, nor to put together a collection of documents, the Bible being, in fact, the creation of the Church, and deriving from her sanction an authority the actual extent of which she has never defined. But where is this kingdom which Christ set up, if, indeed, it is still on earth? "If," he argues—

all that can be found of it is what can be discerned at Constantinople or Canterbury, I say, it has disappeared. . . . We must either give up the belief in the Church as a divine institution altogether, or we must recognise it in that communion of which the Pope is the head. . . . We must take things as they are; to believe in a Church is to believe in the Pope.[2] The question lies between the [Catholic] Church and no divine messenger at all; there is no revelation given us, unless she is the organ of it; for where else is there a Prophet to be found? Your anticipation, which I have been speaking of, has failed, your probability has been falsified, if she be not that Prophet of God. Not that this conclusion is an absurdity, for you cannot take it for granted that your hope of a revelation will be fulfilled; but in whatever degree it is probable that it will be fulfilled, in that degree it is probable that the Church, and nothing else, is the means of fulfilling it. . . . Turn away from the Catholic Church, and to whom will you go? . .

[1] *Grammar of Assent*, p. 486.

[2] "Letter to the Duke of Norfolk," *Anglican Difficulties*, vol. ii. p. 207.

. There is nothing between it and scepticism, when men exert their reason freely. Private creeds, fancy religions, may be showy and imposing to the many in their day; national religions may lie huge and lifeless, and cumber the ground for centuries, and distract the attention or confuse the judgment of the learned; but on the long run it will be found that either the Catholic religion is verily and indeed the coming in of the unseen world into this, or that there is nothing positive, nothing dogmatic, nothing real in any of our notions as to whence we come and whither we are going.[1]

Such is, in substance, the solution of the great question of the day which commends itself to Cardinal Newman. Of those who are farthest from accepting it, there are, I think, not a few who will recognise that he has done much to clear the ground, and to present to the world the true issue: and this, perhaps, is the chief significance for us of the Tractarian Movement.

[1] *Discourses to Mixed Congregations*, p. 279-283.

CHAPTER III.

RELIGIONS AND RELIGION.

CHRISTIANITY, after all, is only one out of many forms of Ancient Religion, claiming the allegiance of mankind, and there are few more noteworthy tokens of that widening of men's thoughts, so observable in the present day, than the great and growing interest taken in the non-Christian systems, which have played, and are playing, so vast a part in the career of humanity. Of all facts about our race in any age, or in any clime, the most momentous, assuredly, are the religious; according to the profound saying of the *Bhagavat Gita*: "Faith is the dominant principle in man: whatever is a man's faith that is a man's self." What men really believe and lay to heart about the meaning and end of human existence, about their own nature and destiny—these, it may be safely affirmed, are the first things about them: for the lives of men are but the expression of their ideas and notions: our deeds are the results of our thoughts. We could not act at all without some sort of creed—even if it be only

the melancholy creed of Goethe's Faust, "to know that nothing can be known." Hence the importance of the addition to our knowledge of the world's creeds which we owe to the recent labours of oriental scholars. Consider, for a moment, what the religious condition of mankind is. Let us take the population of the world to be 1,250,350,000, which appears to be the most probable estimate.[1] Of these, 327,000,000 are set down as Christians, using the word in its widest and vaguest sense, 160,000,000 as Hindus, and 155,000,000 as Mohammedans, while Buddhists are reckoned at the astounding figure of 500,000,000. It is true that in this calculation the statistician counts as Buddhists all the inhabitants of China, a country where, as Professor Max Müller observes, it is difficult to know to what religion a man belongs, as the same person may profess two or three. But rough measures alone are possible in a census of creeds. Vast multitudes in Europe, wholly indifferent, or bitterly hostile, to Christianity, are nominally numbered among its professors. With better reason is the occasional conformist to the Buddhist Church in China accounted a follower of Gotama, although he may also assist now and then at the Confucian sacrifices and may sometimes share in the worship of the Taossean temples.

[1] Upon this subject see the statistics given by Mr. Rhys Davids in his *Buddhism*, p. 6.

abandoned. However that may be, and whatever view we may take upon this matter, it is clear that an overwhelmingly vast majority of mankind have passed away without any acquaintance with the religious system, whether in its present form, or in its earlier Hebrew phase, to which Christians turn for guidance in life and hope in death. And surely the inquiry, What filled the place in their existence which that system fills among us? is an inquiry of much interest and importance to every student of man and society. It is an inquiry of peculiar interest and importance in the present day; for in an examination of the case for or against Christianity, the character and claims of the other religions of the world must not be lost sight of.

It is to the distinguished Oxford Professor whom I mentioned just now that we are indebted for the works which, more than any others, supply us with the means of understanding the great non-Christian religions, fully and fairly. I mean the series of *Sacred Books of the East*, planned by him some years ago, and carried on so successfully: thanks to his indomitable energy and indefatigable perseverance, and to the self-denying labour of the group of accomplished orientalists whose co-operation he has enlisted. For here are made easily accessible to us, for the first time,[1] accurate, complete, and

[1] "Several have [previously] been translated into English, French, German, or Latin, but in some cases these translations are

unembellished English versions of the authentic documents upon which rest the six great systems professing to be founded on books—viz., the religion of the Brahmans, the religion of the followers of the Buddha, the religion of the followers of Zoroaster, the religion of the followers of Confucius, the religion of the followers of Lâotze, the religion of the followers of Mohammed. As Professor Max Müller writes:—

These are the only great and original religions which profess to be founded on Sacred Books, and have preserved them in manuscript. Neither Greeks, nor Romans, nor Germans, nor Celts, nor Slaves have left us anything that deserves the name of Sacred Books. The Homeric Poems are national Epics, like the Râmâyana and the Nibelunge, and the Homeric Hymns have never received that general recognition or sanction which alone can impart to the poetical effusions of personal piety the sacred or canonical character which is the distinguishing feature of the Vedic Hymns. The sacred literature of the early inhabitants of Italy seems to have been of a liturgical rather than of a purely religious kind, and whatever the Celts, the Germans, the Slaves may have possessed of sacred traditions about their gods and heroes, having been handed down by oral tradition chiefly, has perished beyond all hope of recovery. Some portion of the Eddas alone give us an idea of what the religious and heroic poetry of the Scandinavians may have been. The Egyptians possessed Sacred Books, and some of them, such as the Book of the Dead, have come down to us in various forms. There is a translation of the Book of the Dead, by Dr. Birch, published in the fifth volume of Bunsen's *Egypt*, and a new edition

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difficult to procure, in others they are loaded with notes or commentaries which are intended for students by profession only."—Preface to *Sacred Books of the East*, p. xli.

and translation of this important work may be expected from the combined labours of Birch, Chabas, Lepsius, and Naville. In Babylon and Assyria, too, important fragments of what may be called a Sacred Literature have lately come to light. The interpretation, however, of these hieroglyphic and cuneiform texts is as yet so difficult that, for the present, they are of interest to the scholar only, and hardly available for historical purposes.[1]

The six religions, then, which I have enumerated are those for the elucidation of which the series of *Sacred Books of the East* is designed. What I propose now to do is to give some account of these religions, using for that purpose, in the first place, the documents of primary authority thus put before us, and, secondly, the works of other competent oriental scholars. I may, in passing, refer to the number of especially valuable contributions to a knowledge of my subject which will be found in Messrs. Trübner's *Oriental Series*—a series second only in value to the *Sacred Books* themselves.

The six religions which we are thus about to survey may be grouped in two classes:—those confined to particular peoples, tribes, or races, which we may, perhaps, call national or tribal religions; and those which, like Christianity, aim at embracing the whole human race, and which may aptly be denominated universal religions.

[1] *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. i. Pref. p. lx.

Confucianism and Tâoism, Zoroastrianism and Brahminism, are of the former kind; Buddhism and Mohammedanism of the latter. Let us first look at the former group.

We will begin with the religions of China, the indigenous religions; for Buddhism, as I need hardly say, is a foreign importation, perhaps introduced into the country in the third century B.C., but certainly not authoritatively recognised till the third quarter of our first century.[1] The two great native faiths of China are Confucianism and Tâoism; and of these Confucianism, the State religion, "the religion of China *par excellence*," as Dr. Legge calls it, is of peculiar interest to us just now, because it, in some sort, realizes the ideal of a certain school of modern thinkers. M. Edgar Quinet has well remarked, "Rationalism is the religion of China; positive faith the only heresy; the strong-minded man the only Pontiff." And again:—"At the other end of the world a society is discovered whose principles are equality of all its members, intellect the sole ground of pre-eminence, personal merit the sole aristocracy. Everything there is exactly measured, calculated, weighed, by the laws of human nature; its one great idol is good sense. But as soon as these marvels have aroused the admiration of the West comes the dis-

[1] See Dr. Legge's Preface to the Texts of Confucianism, *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. iii. Pref. xiii.

covery that this wonderful people neither breathes, nor moves, nor lives, and that all this wisdom has only ended in creating a sublime automaton. Why? Because man is there deprived of an ideal superior to himself. In Chinese society, man having for his final end—but man, finds his goal in his starting-point: he cannot escape being stifled within the narrow limits of humanity. In this dwarf society, everything is deprived of its crown. Morality wants heroism, royalty, its royal muse; verse, poetry; philosophy, metaphysics; life, immortality; because, above all, God is wanting."[1] Such, according to M. Quinet, is Confucianism; and the description of it seems just enough. I should observe, however, that the name Confucianism is somewhat inaccurate. Confucius—the date of his birth is B.C. 551—emphatically repudiated the character of founder of a religion. He claimed to be only a transmitter. He would neither affirm nor relate anything for which he could not adduce some document of acknowledged authority; although, as Dr. Legge justly remarks, "it is possible that his account of the ancient views and practices took, unconsciously to himself, some colour from the peculiar character of his mind."[2] And, as this very learned writer goes on to observe,—"It is an

[1] *Le Génie des Religions*, c. 7. M. Renan has tersely expressed the same truth: "Ce peuple est de tous le moins supernaturaliste, et là est peut-être le secret de sa médiocrité."

[2] *Sacred Books*, vol. iii. Pref. xiv.

error even to suppose that Confucius compiled the historical documents, poems, and other ancient books from various works existing in his time. Portions of the oldest works had already perished. His study of those that remained, and his exhortations to his disciples also to study them, contributed to their preservation. What he wrote or said about their meaning should be received by us with reverence; but if all the works which he handled had come down to us entire, we should have been, so far as it is possible for foreigners to be, in the same position as he was for learning the ancient religion of his country. Our text-books would be the same as his. Unfortunately, most of the ancient books suffered loss and injury after Confucius had passed from the stage of life. We have reason, however, to be thankful that we possess so many and so much of them. No other literature comparable to them for antiquity has come down to us in such a state of preservation."

Of this literature, the four great classics still extant are called the *Shû King, the Shih King, the Yî King, and the Li King*—that is to say, the Book of History,[1] the Book of Poetry, the Book of Changes,[2] and the Book of Rites. The first and third and a considerable portion of the second of these have

[1] The documents of various kinds which it contains relate to the period from about B.C. 2357-627.—*Sacred Books*, vol iii. p. 1.

[2] Fr. Angelo Lotti gives the following account of this curious work:—"Quid igitur tandem famosus iste *Yî King*? Paucis

been translated by Dr. Legge, in the third and sixteenth volumes of the *Sacred Books*, as also the short treatise attributed to Confucius, known as the *Hsiâo King*, or Classic of Filial Piety—an attempt to construct a religion on that basis. A considerable portion of the *Lî King* has been well translated into French by M. Edouard Biot, but the work is very voluminous, and there seems to be no prospect of a complete rendering of it into any European language. For the other great native religion of China, founded by the contemporary of Confucius, Lâotze, our chief authority is the *Tâo-teh King*, or "Classic of Tâo and Virtue," the only complete record that we have of its founder's views. It has been rendered into French by M. Stanislas Julien, and there are two German versions of it, possessing no great merit. Here it must suffice to point out the points in which the two systems differ and agree. They differ in this. Confucius put aside,

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accipe: ex linearum qualitate continua vel intercisa; earumque situ, imo medio, vel supremo; mutuaque ipsarum relatione, occursu, dissidio, convenientia; ex ipso scilicet trigrammatum corpore seu forma, tum ex trigrammatum symbolo seu imagine, tum ex trigrammatum proprietate seu virtute, tum etiam aliquando ex unius ad alterum hexagramma varietate, eruitur aliqua imago, deducitur aliqua sententia, quoddam veluti oraculum continens, quod sorte etiam consulere possis ad documentum obtinendum, moderandæ vitæ solvendove dubio consentaneum. Ita liber juxta Confucii explicationem in scholis tradi solitam."—Quoted by Dr. Legge, *Sacred Books*, vol. xvi. Pref. p. xvii.

in practice, the Supernatural. His attitude towards it was not one of denial. He may be said to have held a kind of shadowy Theism. He appears to have thought of Heaven as the Epicureans thought of the gods:—

> . . namque deos didici securum agere ævum
> Nec si quid miri faciat natura deos id
> Tristes ex alto cœli demittere tecto.

He acknowledges—as it would seem—"a supreme Providence, which orders but does not direct." "Spirits," he says—meaning the spirits of departed ancestors—"are to be honoured, but kept at a distance." He believes that man is born good, and that the evil in the world is the fruit of bad education and bad laws, and remediable, in great part at all events, by the State. The development of those emotions which arise from man's real nature, and are good, the suppression of those emotions from without which tend to evil—such is his royal road to human perfectibility. He holds that not transcendental problems, but the question how to promote the greatest happiness—that is to say, the greatest material comfort—of the greatest number, should occupy the mind of the wise man. Lâotze, on the other hand, is essentially a mystic, and his religion derives its name of Tâoism from Tâo—the Absolute and Eternal—which he conceived of, if M. Julien correctly expounds him,[1] as

[1] See his translation of the *Tâo-teh King* published under the

"dépourvu d'action, de pensée, de jugement, d'intelligence," and as the only reality from which are all things, by which are all things, and to which all things return. The exact meaning of Tâo has much exercised Sinologues. It has been rendered by some as the Way, by others as the Reason, by others, again, as the Word. It would appear to be all these, and would seem to present some analogy to Will, in Schopenhauer's philosophy, the primordial reality, the universal and fundamental essence, whence issue all activities, pervading the universe, primarily unconscious, but attaining consciousness in the world of representation. In a world which is full of evil, peace is to be found only in "laying hold of the great form of Tâo,"[1] and the way to lay hold upon this One Reality is by self-abnegation. "One pure act of self-resignation" Lâotze holds to be "worth a hundred thousand exercises of one's own will." It was doubtless these elements of mysticism and asceticism which rendered Tâoism—as also in later times Buddhism[2]—a living power to multitudes in China, the deeper instincts of whose spiritual nature the mere Utilitarianism or Secularism or Positivism—call it what you will—

title of *Le Livre de la Voie et de la Vertu* at Paris in 1842. M. Julien appeals to several authoritative writers of the Tâoist School in support of this view.

[1] *Tâo-Teh King*, c. xxxv.

[2] On the similarity in principle between Buddhism and Tâoism, see Dr. Edkins's *Chinese Buddhism*, p. 373.

of Confucius failed to satisfy. They are elements, it may be observed in passing, which in the course of twenty-five centuries appear to have been corrupted into mere abject superstition and magic. So much as to the difference between the systems of Confucius and Lâotze. What they have in common is that they are both politico-ethical systems. Both look to an enlightened despot to remedy the woes of the world: but Confucius would have him achieve this desirable consummation by laws; Lâotze by moral influence. It must be acknowledged that many of the maxims of Lâotze display profound political wisdom, which politicians—I will not say statesmen—of our own day might with advantage learn; as, for example, when he teaches that "a nation is a growth, not a manufacture"; that "the spiritual weapons of this world cannot be formed by laws and regulations"; and that "prohibitory enactments and constant intermeddling in political and social matters merely tend to produce the evils which they are intended to avert." By way of specimen of the Confucian doctrine I shall here give the very remarkable treatise called *The Great Plan*, which we find in the *Shû King*,[1] a document worthy of very careful study. It is of the most venerable antiquity, and may probably be referred—at all events as to the larger portion of it—

[1] Part v. book iv. p. 139. The observations with which Dr. Legge accompanies his translation of this treatise are of much interest.

to a period of two thousand years before Christ. *The Great Plan*, it should be explained, means "the great model for the government of the nation; the method by which the people may be rendered happy and tranquil, in harmony with their condition, through the perfect character of the king, and his perfect administration of government." As P. Gaubil says, "the book is a treatise at once of physics, astrology, divination, politics, morals, and religion."[1]

1. In the thirteenth year, the King went to inquire of the Count of *Khî*, and said to him, "Oh! Count of *Khî*, Heaven, (working) unseen, secures the tranquillity of the lower people, aiding them to be in harmony with their condition. I do not know how the unvarying principles (of its method in doing so) should be set forth in due order."

The Count of *Khî* thereupon replied, "I have heard that in old time Khwăn dammed up the inundating waters, and thereby threw into disorder the arrangement of the five elements. God was consequently roused to anger, and did not give him the Great Plan with its nine divisions, and thus the unvarying principles (of Heaven's method) were allowed to go to ruin. Khwăn was therefore kept a prisoner till his death, and his son Yü rose up (and entered on the same undertaking). To him Heaven gave the Great Plan with its nine divisions, and the unvarying principles (of its method) were set forth in their due order.

2. (Of those divisions) the first is called "the five elements"; the second, "reverent attention to the five (personal) matters"; the third, earnest devotion to the eight (objects of) government"; the fourth, "the harmonious use of the five dividers of time"; the fifth, "the establishment and use of royal perfection"; the sixth, the discriminating use of the three virtues"; the seventh, "the intelligent use of (the means for) the examination of doubts";

[1] Quoted by Dr. Legge, ibid.

the eighth, "the thoughtful use of the various verifications;" the ninth, "the hortatory use of the five (sources of) happiness, and the awing use of the six (occasions of) suffering."

3. i. First, of the five elements.—The first is water; the second is fire; the third, wood; the fourth, metal; and the fifth earth. (The nature of) water is to soak and descend; of fire to blaze and ascend; of wood, to be crooked and straight; of metal, to yield and change; while (that of) earth is seen in seed-sowing and in gathering. That which soaks and descends becomes salt; that which blazes and ascends becomes bitter; that which is crooked and straight becomes sour; that which yields and changes becomes acid; and from seed-sowing and in-gathering comes sweetness.

ii. Second, of the five (personal) matters.—The first is the bodily demeanour; the second, speech; the third, seeing; the fourth, hearing; the fifth, thinking. (The virtue of) the bodily appearance is respectfulness; of speech, accordance (with reason); of seeing, clearness; of hearing, distinctness; of thinking, perspicaciousness. The respectfulness becomes manifest in gravity; accordance (with reason), in orderliness; the clearness, in wisdom; the distinctness, in deliberation; and the perspicaciousness, in sageness.

iii. Third, of the eight (objects of) government.—The first is food; the second is wealth and articles of convenience; the third, sacrifices; the fourth, (the business of) the Minister of Works; the fifth, (that of) the Minister of Instruction; the sixth, (that of) the Minister of Crime; the seventh, the observances to be paid to guests; the eighth, the army.

iv. Fourth, of the five dividers of time.—The first is the year (or the planet Jupiter); the second, the moon; the third, the sun; the fourth, the stars and planets and the zodiacal spaces; and the fifth, the calendaric calculations.

v. Fifth, of royal perfection.—The sovereign, having established (in himself) the highest degree and pattern of excellence, concentrates in his own person the five (sources of) happiness, and proceeds to diffuse them, and give them to the multitudes of the people. Then they, on their part, embodying your perfection, will give it (back) to you, and secure the preservation of it. Among all the multitudes of the people there will be no unlawful con-

federacies, and among men (in office) there will be no bad and selfish combinations; let the sovereign establish in (himself) the highest degree and pattern of excellence.

Among all the multitudes of the people there will be those who have ability to plan and to act, and who keep themselves (from evil):—do you keep such in mind; and there will be those who, not coming up to the highest point of excellence, yet do not involve themselves in evil:—let the sovereign receive such. And when a placid satisfaction appears in their countenances, and they say, "Our love is fixed on virtue," do you then confer favours on them;—those men will in this way advance to the perfection of the sovereign. Do not let him oppress the friendless and childless, nor let him fear the high and distinguished. When men (in office) have ability and administrative power, let them be made still more to cultivate their conduct; and the prosperity of the country will be promoted. All (such) right men, having a competency, will go on in goodness. If you cannot cause them to have what they love in their families, they will forthwith proceed to be guilty of crime. As to those who have not the love of virtue, although you confer favours (and emoluments) on them, they will (only) involve you in the guilt of employing the evil.

Without deflection, without unevenness,
Pursue the royal righteousness.
Without selfish likings,
Pursue the royal way.
Without selfish dislikings,
Pursue the royal path.
Avoid deflection, avoid partiality;—
Broad and long is the royal way.
Avoid partiality, avoid deflection;—
Level and easy is the royal way.
Avoid perversity, avoid one-sidedness;—
Correct and straight is the royal way.
(Ever) seek for this perfect excellence,
(Ever) turn to this perfect excellence.

He went on to say, "This amplification of the royal perfection contains the unchanging (rule), and is the (great) lesson;—yea, it

is the lesson of God. All the multitudes of the people, instructed in this amplification of the perfect excellence, and carrying it into practice, will thereby approximate to the glory of the Son of Heaven, and say, 'The Son of Heaven is the parent of the people, and so becomes the sovereign of all under the sky.' "

vi. Sixth, of the three virtues.—The first is correctness and straightforwardness; the second, strong rule; and the third, mild rule. In peace and tranquillity, correctness and straightforwardness (must sway); in violence and disorder, strong rule; in harmony and order, mild rule. For the reserved and retiring there should be (the stimulus of) the strong rule; for the high(-minded) and distinguished (the restraint of) the mild rule.

It belongs only to the sovereign to confer dignities and rewards, to display the terrors of majesty, and to receive the revenues (of the kingdom). There should be no such thing as a minister's conferring dignities or rewards, displaying the terrors of majesty, or receiving the revenues. Such a thing is injurious to the clans and fatal to the states (of the kingdom); smaller affairs are thereby managed in a one-sided and perverse manner, and the people fall into assumptions and excesses.

vii. Seventh, of the (means for the) examination of doubts.[1]—Officers having been chosen and appointed for divining by the tortoise-shell and the stalks of the Achillea, they are to be charged (on occasion) to execute their duties. (In doing this) they will find (the appearances of) rain, of clearing up, of cloudiness, of want of connexion, and of crossing; and the inner and outer

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[1] "The tortoise," says Kû Hsî, "after great length of years becomes intelligent; and the Khî plant will yield, when a hundred years old a hundred stalks from one root, and is also a spiritual and intelligent thing." The two divinations were in reality a questioning of spiritual beings, the plant and the shell being employed, because of their mysterious intelligence, to indicate their intimations. The way of divination by the shell was by the application of fire to scorch it till the indications appeared on it; and that by the stalks of the plant was to manipulate in a prescribed way forty-nine of them, eighteen different times, till the diagrams were formed *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. iii. p. 145.

diagrams. In all (the indications) are seven ;—five given by the shell and two by the stalks ; and (by means) of these any errors (in the mind) may be traced out. These officers having been appointed, when the divination is proceeded with, three men are to interpret the indications, and the (consenting) words of two of them are to be followed.

When you have doubts about any great matter, consult with your own mind; consult with your high ministers and officers; consult with the common people; consult the tortoise-shell and divining-stalks. If you, the shell, the stalks, the ministers and officers, and the common people, all agree about a course, this is what is called a great concord, and the result will be the welfare of your person and good fortune to your descendants. If you, the shell and the stalks, agree, while the ministers and officers and the common people oppose, the result will be fortunate. If the ministers and officers, with the shell and stalks, agree, while you and the common people oppose, the result will be fortunate. If the common people, the shell, and the stalks, agree, while you, with the ministers and officers, oppose, the result will be fortunate. If you and the shell agree, while the stalks, with the ministers and officers, and the common people, oppose, internal operations will be fortunate, and external undertakings unlucky. When the shell and stalks are both opposed to the views of men, there will be good fortune in being still, and active operations will be unlucky.

viii. Eighth, of the various verifications.—They are rain, sunshine, heat, cold, wind, and seasonableness. When the five come, all complete, and each in its proper order, (even) the various plants will be richly luxuriant. Should any one of them be either excessively abundant or excessively deficient, there will be evil.

There are the favourable verifications:—namely, of gravity, which is emblemed by seasonable rain; of orderliness, emblemed by seasonable sunshine; of wisdom, emblemed by seasonable heat; of deliberation, emblemed by seasonable cold; and of sageness, emblemed by seasonable wind. There are also the unfavourable verifications :—namely, of recklessness, emblemed by constant rain; of assumption, emblemed by constant sunshine; of indolence, emblemed by constant heat; of hastiness, emblemed by constant cold; and of stupidity, emblemed by constant wind. He went on

to say, "The King should examine the (character of the whole) year; the high ministers and officers (that of) the month; and the inferior officers (that of) the day. If, throughout the year, the month, the day, there be an unchanging seasonableness, all the grains will be matured; the measures of government will be wise; heroic men will stand forth distinguished; and in the families (of the people) there will be peace and prosperity. If, throughout the year, the month, the day, the seasonableness be interrupted, the various kinds of grain will not be matured; the measures of government will be dark and unwise; heroic men will be kept in obscurity; and in the families (of the people) there will be an absence of repose.

"By the common people the stars should be examined. Some stars love wind, and some love rain. The courses of the sun and moon give winter and summer. The way in which the moon follows the stars gives wind and rain."

ix. Ninth, of the five (sources of) happiness.[1]—The first is long life; the second, riches; the third, soundness of body and serenity of mind; the fourth, the love of virtue; and the fifth, fulfilling to the end the will (of Heaven). Of the six extreme evils, the first is misfortune, shortening the life; the second, sickness; the third, distress of mind; the fourth, poverty; the fifth, wickedness; the sixth, weakness.[2]

And now let us pass from China to Persia, and look at the documents which remain to us of the great religion of the Magi—once the dominant creed of a mighty empire, now almost extinct in its ancient seat, and kept alive by the small community, numbering at the outside only some 150,000

[1] Dr. Legge remarks, "It is hardly possible to see how this division enters into the scheme of *The Great Plan*."

[2] *Sacred Books*, vol. iii. pp. 139-149.

souls, known as the Parsis, and for the last two centuries settled at Bombay. "As the Parsis are the ruins of a people [writes Professor Darmesteter], so are their Sacred Books the ruins of a religion. There has been no other great belief in the world that ever left such poor and meagre monuments of its past splendour. Yet great is the value which that small book, the Avesta, and the belief of that scanty people, the Parsis, have in the eyes of the historian and theologist, as they present to us the last reflex of the ideas which prevailed in Iran during the five centuries which preceded, and the seven which followed, the birth of Christ, a period which gave to the world the Gospels, the Talmud, and the Qur'ân. Persia, it is known, had much influence on each of the movements which produced, or proceeded from, those three books; she lent much to the first heresiarchs, much to the Rabbis, much to Mohammed. By help of the Parsi religion and the Avesta we are enabled to go back to the very heart of that most momentous period in the history of religious thought which saw the blending of the Aryan mind with the Semitic, and thus opened the second stage of Aryan thought."[1]

Such is the interest and importance of the sacred literature of the Parsis. The story of the opening up of that literature to European investigation is one of the most romantic in the history of scholarship. Until towards the end of the last

[1] *Sacred Books*, vol. iv. Introduction, p. xii.

century the *Zend-Avesta*, although manuscripts of it had been brought to Europe, was a sealed book to the Western world. It was about the year 1750 that Anquetil Duperron conceived the design of penetrating its secrets and of earning for himself the glory of being the first to explore those mysterious regions of religious thought. The aspiration might well have seemed Quixotic in the extreme, for the enthusiastic young Frenchman was without money, without friends, and but modestly equipped with scholarship. But, "audax omnia perpeti," he worked his way out to Bombay as a common sailor. Arrived there, after a very difficult and dangerous voyage, he found himself apparently little nearer his end than when he started, but fortunately the protection of the French Government was obtained for him. He set about learning the Avesta and Pahlavi languages, and after many rebuffs he acquired the confidence and friendship of learned Parsi priests. At last he thought himself sufficiently advanced to engage upon a translation of the *Zend-Avesta*, and in 1761 he returned to Europe bringing it with him, as well as some one hundred and eighty oriental manuscripts. In 1771 he published his great work, "Zend-Avesta, the work of Zoroaster, containing the theological, physical, and moral ideas of this law-giver, the ceremonies of the divine service which he established, and several important traits respecting the ancient history of the Persians, translated into French from

the Zend original, with Notes and several Treatises for illustrating the matters contained in it."

Thus was a beginning made of Avesta studies in Europe. Anquetil's work was at first received by most scholars of name with incredulity and even contempt. Sir William Jones and the Persian lexicographer Richardson thought that he had been imposed upon by the Parsi priests, and that the documents which he had obtained from them were manifest forgeries. Meiners and Tychsen were of the same opinion. But Kleuker admitted the authenticity of Anquetil's work, as also did most French orientalists. Its authenticity has long ago been put beyond question; but the researches of later scholars have shown that its translations are often very wide of the sense of the original, as is not surprising, seeing that the translator possessed neither grammar or dictionary of the Avesta language. Dr. Haug indeed observes,[1] that from a critical point of view it can only be regarded as a summary in an extended form of the contents of the *Avesta*. It was another Frenchman, the illustrious Eugène Burnouf, who, among his other titles to fame, must be reckoned the real founder of Avesta philology; but, as Dr. Haug points out, "he never could have succeeded in laying the foundation without Anquetil's labours." The foundation was however laid, and securely; and subsequent scholars—conspicuous

[1] *Essays on the Parsis*, p. 25. I am largely indebted to Dr. Haug for the foregoing account of Anquetil Duperron's work.

among them Bopp and Spiegel, Westergaard and Benfey, Haug and West, the learned Catholic divine Windischmann, whose researches were cut short by his premature death, and Mgr. de Harlez, the distinguished Louvain professor—have reared upon it the present well-compacted edifice of Zend learning. Lastly must be mentioned the French savant, Dr. Darmesteter, to whom we owe the translation of the *Vendîdâd* and the *Yasts* published in the fourth and twenty-third volumes of the *Sacred Books of the East*. Besides the *Vendîdâd*, the religious civil and criminal code of the ancient Iranians, and the *Yasts*, a collection of Sacred Hymns, there are two other portions of the *Zend-Avesta:* the *Vispêrad*, a manual of sacrificial litanies, and the *Yasna*, a similar compilation, especially valuable as containing the Five *Gâthas* of Zoroaster, venerable documents, which undoubtedly record the teaching of the Prophet himself. In addition to the *Avesta*, there is another collection of writings held sacred by the Parsis—the Pahlavi[1] texts. It is to these that we must go for "most of the details relating to the traditions, ceremonies, and customs of the ancient faith." We find in them much of the medieval edifice built by later Persian priestcraft on the primitive foundations, with a

[1] A curious idiom in which not only the vocabulary but even the grammar of the Iranian tongue has been invaded by Semitic influences. See Dr. Haug's *Essays*, p. 78, and Professor Sayce's *Introduction to the Science of Language*, vol. ii. p. 81.

strange mixture of old and new materials; and they exhibit the usual symptoms of declining powers—a strong insistence upon complex forms and minute details, with little of the freedom of treatment and simplicity of outline characteristic of the ancient bards.[1] Of some of the most significant of these we have translations by Dr. West in the fourth and eighteenth volumes of the *Sacred Books*.

For the ancestors of the Iranians and the Hindus, as of the Kelts and Germans, Greeks and Italians, we must unquestionably go to the Aryan clan, which before its dispersion was seated in Bactriana, on the western slopes of the Belurtag and Mustag, and near the sources of the Oxus and the Jaxartes. "After this clan broke up [observes Professor Max Müller] the ancestors of the Indians and Zoroastrians must have remained together for some time, in their migrations or new settlements, and I believe it was the reform of Zoroaster which produced at last the split between the worshippers of the Vedic gods and the worshippers of Ormuzd."[2] When this happened is very uncertain. Dr. Haug tells us that "under no circumstances can we assign Zoroaster a later date than B.C. 1000"; and that "we may even find reason for placing his era much earlier, and making him a contemporary of Moses";[3]

[1] Dr. West's Introduction to the Pahlavi Texts, *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. v. p. ix.

[2] *Lectures on the Science of Language*, 1st series, p. 199.

[3] *Essays*, p. 297.

while Pliny places him several thousand years before Moses. Bunsen writes, "Zoroaster the prophet cannot have lived later than B.C. 3000 (250 years before Abraham therefore), but 6000 or 5000 before Plato may more likely be correct, according to the statements of Aristotle and Eudoxus."[1] The causes of the schism, Dr. Haug observes, were of a social and political, as well as of a religious, nature. The Iranians not only cast off the idolatrous Deva religion, into which the ancient Aryan worship had degenerated, but also forsook the pastoral for the agricultural way of life.[2] As to Zoroaster's doctrines, the same learned and judicious writer thus briefly, but clearly and, as I incline to think, accurately, summarizes them:—

> The leading idea of his theology was Monotheism—*i.e.*, that there are not many gods, but only one [symbolized by and manifested in the elements—especially fire];[3] and the principle of his speculative philosophy was Dualism—*i.e.*, the supposition of two primeval causes of the real world and of the intellectual; while his moral philosophy was moving in the Triad of thought, word, and deed. Having regard to the early period at which he must have lived, long before the Greeks were acquainted with anything like philosophical speculation, we cannot expect him to have established a complete and developed system of philosophical thoughts, which cannot even be said of Plato; but the few philosophical ideas which may be discovered in his sayings show that he was a great and deep

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[1] *Chips from a German Workshop*, vol. iii. p. 478.

[2] *Essays*, p. 292. Dr. Darmesteter does not believe in this supposed schism.

[3] I interpolate these words from Professor Monier Williams's little book, *Hinduism*, p. 5.

thinker, who stood far above his contemporaries, and even above the most enlightened men of many subsequent centuries. The great fame he enjoyed, even with the ancient Greeks and Romans, who were so proud of their own learning and wisdom, is a sufficient proof of the high and pre-eminent position he must once have occupied in the history of the progress of the human mind.[1]

By way of specimen of Zoroaster's teaching, it must suffice to quote the following *Gâtha* :—

I will now tell you who are assembled here the wise sayings of Mazda, the praises of Ahura and the hymns of the good spirit, the sublime truth which I see arising out of these sacred flames.

You shall, therefore, hearken to the soul of nature (*i.e.*, to plough and cultivate the earth); contemplate the beams of fire with a most pious mind! Every one, both men and women, ought to-day to choose his creed (between the Deva and the Ahura religion). Ye offspring of renowned ancestors, awake to agree with us (*i.e.*, to approve of my lore, to be delivered to you at this moment)!

[The prophet begins to deliver the words revealed to him through the sacred flames.]

In the beginning there was a pair of twins, two spirits, each of a peculiar activity; these are the good and the base, in thought, word, and deed. Choose one of these two spirits! Be good, not base!

And these two spirits united created the first (the material things); one, the reality; the other, the non-reality. To the liars (the worshippers of the devas—*i.e.*, gods) existence will become bad, whilst the believer in the true God enjoys prosperity.

Of these two spirits you must choose one, either the evil, the originator of the worst actions, or the true, holy spirit. Some may wish to have the hardest lot (*i.e.*, those who will not leave the polytheistic deva religion), others adore Ahuramazda by means of sincere actions.

You cannot belong to both of them (*i.e.*, you cannot be worship-

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[1] *Essays*, p. 301. But see Dr. Darmesteters *Ormazd et Ahriman*, and his Introduction to vol. iv. of *The Sacred Books*.

pers of the one true God and of many gods at the same time). One of the devas, against whom we are fighting, might overtake you, when in deliberation (what faith you are to embrace), whispering you to choose the worst mind.[1] Then the devas flock together to assault the two lives (the life of the body and that of the soul) praised by the prophets.

And to succour this life (to increase it), Armaiti[2] came with wealth, the good and true mind; she, the everlasting one, created the material world; but the soul, as to time, the first cause among created beings, was with Thee.

But when he (the evil spirit) comes with one of these evils (to sow mistrust among the believers), then thou hast the power through the good mind of punishing them who break their promises, O righteous spirit![3]

Thus let us be such as help the life of the future.[4] The wise living spirits are the greatest supporters of it.[5] The prudent man wishes only to be there where wisdom is at home.

Wisdom is the shelter from lies, the annihilation of the destroyer (the evil spirit). All perfect things are garnered up in the splendid residence of the Good Mind (Vohu-manô), the Wise (Mazda), and the Righteous (Asha),[6] who are known as the best beings.

Therefore perform ye the commandments which, pronounced by Mazda himself, have been given to mankind; for they are a nuisance

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[1] "Worse mind: a philosophical term," Dr. Haug explains, "employed by Zoroaster to designate his principle of non-existence, non-reality, which is the cause of all evils."

[2] She is the angel of earth and the personification of prayer.

[3] "That is to say," as Dr. Haug thinks, "those who give to-day the solemn promise to leave the polytheistic religion and to follow that preached by Zoroaster will be punished by God should they break their promise."

[4] Here, according to Dr. Haug, we have "the germs of the doctrine of the resurrection."

[5] The archangels.

[6] Three names of archangels.

and perdition to liars, but prosperity to the believer in the truth; they are the fountain of happiness.[1]

Of this portion of the *Yasna*, Dr. Haug remarks:—

It is a metrical speech, delivered by Spitama Zarathushtra himself, when standing before the sacred fire, to a numerously attended meeting of his countrymen. The chief tendency of this speech is to induce his countrymen to forsake the worship of the devas or gods —*i.e.*, polytheism, to bow only before Ahuramazda, and to separate themselves entirely from the idolaters In order to gain the object wished for, he propounds the great difference which exists between the two religions, Monotheism and Polytheism, showing that, whereas the former is the fountain of all prosperity both in this and the other life, the latter is utterly ruinous to mankind. He attempts further to explain the origin of both these religions, so diametrically opposed to each other, and finds it in the existence of two primeval causes, called "existence" and "non-existence." But this merely philosophical doctrine is not to be confounded with his theology, according to which he acknowledged only one God.[2]

In speaking of the *Avesta* I have quoted, with assent, the view of the illustrious *savant* Dr. Haug, the most thorough and scientific champion of the comparative school: the school, that is, which holds that the true key to its interpretation is to be found in comparing it with the *Vedas;* the school which, as Dr. Darmesteter expresses it, insists upon the undeniable fact, that the *Avesta* and the *Veda* are "two echoes of one and the same voice, the reflex of one and the same thought; and that the *Vedas*, therefore, are both the best lexicon and the best

[1] *Yas.* xxx.

[2] *Essays*, p. 149. I doubt much whether Zoroaster distinguished rigidly between his theology and his philosophy.

commentary to the *Avesta*."[1] The source of both is "the religion followed by the common forefathers of the Iranians and Indians, the Indo-Iranian religion," which was informed by two general ideas, that there is a law in nature and that there is a war in nature: "a latent monotheism and an unconscious dualism." Both these ideas, in the further development of Indian thought, slowly disappeared, but Mazdeism lost neither of them.[2]

I must not, however, pursue this subject, but must now go on to Hinduism, and say something about what has been done of late years for its elucidation. In 1846 a man of high gifts and noble aims, the late Mr. Maurice, in his Preface to his well-known *Boyle Lectures on the Religions of the World*, wrote, "The Essay of Mr. Colebrooke on the Vedas, in the eighth volume of the *Asiatic Researches*, and Mr. Rosen's Latin translation of the *Rig-Veda*, are at present the chief helps which the Western student possesses for the knowledge of the earliest Hindu faith"; and in a footnote to the words "at present" he adds, "I understand that a young German, now in London, whose knowledge of Sanskrit is profound, and his industry *plus quam Germanica*, has it in contemplation to publish and translate all the Vedas." The "young German"

[1] *Sacred Books*, vol. iv. Introd. p. xxvi. [2] *Ibid.* lvii.

in question is now the Professor of Comparative Philology at Oxford, and a *savant* of European and more than European celebrity. For his name is familiar as a household word, not only wherever Western civilization has penetrated, but in the regions of the dim mysterious East, hitherto most inaccessible to our modes of thought; even where

> Far hence, in Asia,
> On the smooth convent roofs,
> On the gold terraces
> Of holy Lassa,
> Bright shines the sun.

The task to which Professor Max Müller was preparing to address himself when Mr. Maurice wrote has been successfully carried out, and the first complete edition has been given to the world of the *Rig-Veda*, together with the Commentary of Sâyana Akârya—the most authoritative of Hindu theologians.

The *Rig-Veda*, as I need hardly say, is emphatically *the Veda*, the other books bearing that name being merely different arrangements of its hymns for special purposes, and having only a liturgical interest. It is divided into three portions known as *Mantra*, hymns of prayer and praise; *Brahmana*, ritual; and *Upanishad*, mystic doctrine, in which "all the religious philosophy of the Vedic age is gathered up," not for the multitude, but for those that could receive it. A complete translation of the Hymns of the *Rig-Veda* is promised us by Professor Max Müller. Here, by way of specimen

of the ancient sacred verse of our Aryan ancestors, I quote the following metrical rendering of one of them :[1]—

Nor Aught nor Nought existed ; yon bright sky
Was not, nor heaven's broad woof outstretched above.
What covered all ? what sheltered ? what concealed ?
Was it the water's fathomless abyss ?
There was not death—yet was there nought immortal,
There was no confine betwixt day and night ;
The only One breathed breathless by itself,
Other than It there nothing since has been.
Darkness there was, and all at first was veiled
In gloom profound—an ocean without light—
The germ that still lay covered in the husk
Burst forth, one nature, from the fervent heat.
Then first came love upon it, the new spring
Of mind—yea, poets in their hearts discerned,
Pondering, this bond between created things
And uncreated. Comes this spark from earth
Piercing and all-pervading, or from heaven ?
Then seeds were sown, and mighty powers arose—
Nature below, and power and will above—
Who knows the secret ? who proclaimed it here
Whence, whence this manifold creation sprang ?
The gods themselves came later into being—
Who knows from whence this great creation sprang ?
He, from whom all this great creation came,
Whether his will created or was mute,
The Most High Seer that is in highest heaven,
He knows it—or perchance even He knows not.

Of the *Upanishads* five of the principal are given us in the first volume of the *Sacred Books*, together with a copious and very learned Intro-

[1] From *Chips from a German Workshop*, vol. i. p. 78. It is the 129th Hymn of the tenth book of the *Rig-Veda*.

duction, in which their history, their position in Vedic literature, their character and meaning, are discussed with all the vigour, incisiveness, and critical acumen which characterise Professor Max Müller. I may note in passing that Anquetil Duperron, the discoverer and first translator of the *Zend-Avesta*, was also the first to render the *Upanishads* accessible to European scholars by means of a Latin translation made by him from a Persian version prepared in 1657 for Dârâ Shukoh, the eldest son of the famous monarch Shâh Jehân. This translation, although, as Professor Max Müller truly observes, executed in an utterly unintelligible style, is of special interest as having been the principal medium through which Schopenhauer obtained his acquaintance with oriental thought. It is not easy to overrate the obligations of the prophet of nineteenth-century pessimism to this ancient philosophy. He himself, in the Preface to his great work, asserts that every one of the disconnected aphorisms which constitute the *Upanishads* may be deduced as a necessary result from the fundamental thoughts which he enunciates, and admonishes his readers that initiation in this primitive Indian wisdom is the best preparation for his doctrine. And in the *Parerga* he says:—"Oh, how thoroughly is the mind here washed clean of all early-engrafted Jewish superstitions, and of all philosophy that cringes before those superstitions. In the whole world there is no study so elevating and beneficial.

It has been the solace of my life, and will be the solace of my death." And again:—"In India, our religion will now and never strike root: the primitive wisdom of the human race will never be pushed aside there by the events of Galilee. On the contrary, Indian wisdom will flow back upon Europe, and produce a thorough change in our knowing and thinking." I quote these singular statements because they seem to possess a certain importance as exhibiting the estimate of this ancient philosophy formed by an intellect which, however strangely perverted, must be allowed to be one of the most acute, subtle, and vigorous of modern times. Even the aberrations of genius are instructive. Great wits are worthy of study even when they overstep the "thin partitions," which, as we know, divide them from madness. For the rest, few disciplined minds, of any school of thought, that have weighed the matter, will refuse assent to Professor Max Müller's judgment, that here Schopenhauer "seems to have allowed himself to be carried away too far by his enthusiasm for the less known"; that "he is blind to the dark sides of the *Upanishads*, and wilfully shuts his eyes to the bright rays of eternal truth in the Gospels."

I give one passage from the *Upanishads*. It is the fourteenth khanda of the *Khándogya-Upanishad*.

[1] See Prof. Max Müller's Introduction to the *Upanishads*, *Sacred Books*, vol. i. pp. lix.-lxiv.

I have selected it as more likely to be attractive and intelligible than most to the generality of English readers:—

All this (*i.e.*, all that exists) is Brahman (neuter). Let a man meditate on that (visible world), as beginning, ending, and breathing in it (the Brahman). Now man is a creature of will. According to what his will is in this world, so will he be when he has departed this life. Let him therefore have this will and belief:—The intelligent whose body is spirit, whose form is light, whose thoughts are true, whose nature is like ether (omnipresent and invisible), from whom all works, all desires, all sweet odours and tastes proceed; he who embraces all this, who never speaks, and is never surprised; he is my self within the heart, smaller than a corn of rice, smaller than a corn of barley, smaller than a mustard-seed, smaller than a canary-seed or the kernel of a canary-seed. He also is my self within the heart, greater than the earth, greater than the sky, greater than heaven, greater than all these worlds. He from whom all works, all desires, all sweet odours and tastes proceed, who embraces all this, who never speaks, and is never surprised, he, my self within the heart, is that Brahman. (n.) When I shall have departed from hence I shall obtain him (that Self). He who has this faith has no doubt.[1] Thus said Sândilya; yea, thus he said.[2]

It must not be supposed however that the *Upanishads* are purely metaphysical. As Barth remarks, "These singular books, though of a character so heterogeneous, are still more practical than speculative. They address themselves more to man as man, than to man as thinker; their aim is not so much to expound systems as to teach the way of salvation. They are pre-eminently exhortations to the spiritual life, perplexed and confused

[1] Or, He who has faith and no doubt will obtain this.

[2] *Sacred Books*, vol. i. p. 48.

indeed, but delivered at times with a pathos that is both lofty and affecting. It seems as if the whole religious life of the period, which we miss so much in the ritualistic literature, had become concentrated in these writings. Notwithstanding their pretensions to mystery, they are in the main works that aim at proselytism, but a proselytism prosecuting its task within a limited circle. The tone which prevails in them, especially in their manner of address and in the dialogue, in which there is at times a touch of singular sweetness, is that of a preaching which appeals to the initiated . . . . When that remarkable man Rammohun Roy, who undertook at the beginning of this century to reform Hinduism, expressed his belief that if a selection were made from the Upanishads it would contribute more than any other publication to the religious improvement of his people, he was not the victim of an altogether groundless delusion."[1]

It may be well to find place here for the few sentences in which Professor Max Müller has admirably summed up the true character of the *Upanishads*:—

There is not what could be called a philosophical system in these Upanishads. They are, in the true sense of the word, guesses at truth, frequently contradicting each other, yet all tending in one direction. The keynote of the whole Upanishads is

[1] *The Religions of India*, by A. Barth. English translation, p. 76. For further information on the teaching of the *Upanishads* see a note to Chap. i. of the present volume (p. 31).

"Know thyself," but with a much deeper meaning than that of the Γνῶθι σεαυτόν of the Delphic Oracle. The "Know thyself" of the Upanishads means, Know thy true self, that which underlies thine Ego, and find it and know it in the highest, the Eternal Self, the One without a second, which underlies the whole world. This was the final solution of the search after the Infinite, the Invisible, the Unknown, the Divine, a search begun in the simplest hymns of the Veda, and ended in the Upanishads, or, as they were afterwards called, the Vedânta, the end or the highest object of the Veda.[1]

I should remark that the interest of this literature is by no means bygone. My own experience and observation in India lead me fully to endorse Major Jacob's observation, that if the people of that country can be said to have any system of religion at all, apart from mere caste observances, it is found in the *Vedânta* philosophy, the leading tenets of which are known, to some extent, in every village.[2]

I agree with Professor Max Müller that the only original, the only important, period of Sanskrit literature which deserves to become the subject of earnest study, far more than it is at present, is that period which preceded the rise of Buddhism, when Sanskrit was still the spoken language of India, and

[1] *Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion:* delivered in the Chapter House of Westminster Abbey, in April, May, and June, 1878, by F. Max Müller, p. 318.

[2] See the Preface to his admirable translation of the *Vedântasâra* (Manual of Hindu Pantheism), published in Trübner's *Oriental Series*. A further account of the Vedântist doctrine will be found at p. 144 of the present volume.

the worship of Śiva was still unknown.[1] Still there is much of great interest, which might well tempt one to linger, in the later developments of Brahminism, as will be evident to any one who will peruse the volumes of the *Sacred Books* containing the collection of *Aphorisms of the Sacred Laws*, the translation of the *Satapatha Brâhmana*, and the selected episodes from the *Mahâbhârata* of which the most striking and noteworthy is the *Bhagavat-Gita*.[2] The *Bhagavat-Gita*—the Divine Lay—may it not, apart from all theories as to its origin, be considered as the most pure and elevated production of the Hindu mind? Certainly in beauty of form it has no rival; and before I pass away from this part of the subject I must present one extract from it. I do not know that I can do better than select the Ninth Lection entitled, *Devotion through the Royal Knowledge and the Royal*

[1] *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 145.

[2] The date of the *Bhagavat-Gita*, as I need hardly say, is among the most vexed questions of oriental scholarship. Mr. Telang, in the very learned and ingenious argument which will be found in his Introduction to the eighth volume of the *Sacred Books*, contends that "the Gita ranges itself as a member of the Upanishad group, so to say, in Sanskrit literature," and thinks it "more than probable that the latest date at which it can have been composed must be earlier than the third century B.C., although it is impossible to say, at present, how much earlier" (p. 34). This view has been controverted with much ability by Mr. Davies, in an Appendix to his translation of the *Gita*, where, after an elaborate review of the whole subject, he maintains that "the question of date cannot be settled with absolute certainty, but all the evidence we have points to a time not earlier than the third century A.C." (p. 194).

Mystery. I borrow Mr. Davies's excellent translation :—

THE HOLY ONE SPOKE.

Now will I declare to thee, who dost not cavil, that most mysterious knowledge, divine and human, which when thou knowest, thou wilt be free from evil.

Royal knowledge! royal mystery! the supreme purification, this, comprehensible at sight, holy, easy to practise, and eternal.

The men who receive not by faith this holy doctrine attain not to Me, O destroyer of foes! but return to the ways of this world of death.

All this universe has been spread out by Me, by my unmanifested material nature (*Prakriti*). All things dwell in Me ; I do not dwell in them.

5. And yet these things dwell not in me. See my royal mystery![1] My spirit, which is the source of all, supports all things but dwells not in them:

As the mighty wind moves everywhere, but is ever contained within the ether, know that thus all beings are contained in Me.

At the end of a *Kalpa*, all things, O son of Kunti! go into my material nature; at the beginning of a *Kalpa*, I send them forth again.

Resting on my material nature (*Prakriti*), I send forth again and again all this mass of beings, without their will, by the power of Prakriti.

And these works, O destroyer of foes! bind not Me![2] who sit apart as a stranger and in these works am unattached.

10. Nature (*Prakriti*), under my surveillance, gives birth to

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[1] Burnouf translates "Tel est le mystère de la supreme union."

[2] All works, except works of devotion, bind the doer, *i.e.*, they connect him with bodily conditions, as their result in a future life. The works of Brahmā are not followed by any consequences, because they are done without "attachment." So a perfect Yogin may act, and then attain to *nirvāna*.

everything, moving or fixed (animate or inanimate), and by this means, O son of Kunti! the world revolves.

Fools disregard Me when invested with a human body, not knowing my higher nature, the Supreme Lord of all.

Vain in hope, vain in action, vain in knowledge, and devoid of sense; these partake of the deluding nature of Rākshasas and Asuras (demons: enemies of the gods).

But the great-souled men, O son of Prithā! who partake of the divine nature, worship Me with hearts resting on no other (God), knowing Me as the eternal source of all things.

Evermore glorifying Me, eternally striving (after Me), steadfast in vows and doing Me reverence; they worship Me with a constant devotion (*Bhakti*).

15. Others also, sacrificing with the sacrifice of knowledge, worship Me, everywhere present in many forms by my oneness and my divisible nature.

I am the offering; I am the sacrifice; I am the offering to forefathers; I am the sacred herb; I am the holy hymn and the sacrificial butter; I am the fire; I am the burnt-offering.

I am the father, mother,[1] sustainer, and grandsire[2] of this universe. I am the object of knowledge, the lustration, the syllable OM; I am, too, the Rig-, Sāma-, and the Yajur-Veda.

I am the way, the sustainer, the Lord, the witness, the dwelling, refuge, and friend, the source, and the destroyer (of life), the place, the depository, and the eternal seed.

I cause heat; I withhold and I send forth the rain. I am also immortality and death, Arjuna! I am *sat* (formal existence) and *asat* (abstract, undeveloped being).[3]

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[1] Cf. Plato in the *Timæus* (s. 24): "For the present then we must conceive three kinds of things; that which is made, and that after the likeness of which it is made; and of these we may liken the recipient (the matter) to the *Mother:* that after which it is made to the Father; and that produced between the two to the offspring."

[2] The grandsire as the source of *Prakriti*, from whom all things emanate.

[3] Mr. Thomson explains these words as spirit and matter. They

20. They who follow the three Vedas, who drink the soma-juice and are purified from sin, who offer sacrifices, ask of me a passage to Heaven. These attain to the holy world of Indra and eat in Heaven the divine food of the gods.

These men, when they have enjoyed this vast heavenly world and their merit is exhausted, return to this world of death. Following the three holy books (the Vedas), and desiring the objects of the senses, they obtain that which comes and goes.

A full assurance (of blessedness) I bring to those who worship Me and never seek refuge in another (god), who are ever united (to Me) in devotion.

Even those who worship other gods and are endowed with faith sacrifice to me, O son of Kuntī! when they sacrifice, but not according to ancient rule:

For I am the enjoyer and the Lord also of all sacrifices, but these men know Me not in truth, and therefore they fall.

25. They who are devoted by vows to gods, go to gods; they who devote themselves to Pitris (ancestral manes), go to Pitris; they who sacrifice to Bhūtas (malignant goblins), go to Bhūtas; they who worship Me alone, come to Me.

When any one offers to me in devotion a leaf, a flower, fruit, or water, I accept this pious offering of one who is devout in mind.

Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou offerest in sacrifice or givest (to others), whatever austerity thou practisest, do it as an offering to Me.

Thus shalt thou be free from the bonds of works producing

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mean the world of visible things (*sat*), and the invisible, undeveloped, *Prakriti* (*asat*), See *Sānkha Kārikā* p. 27. Cf. *Rig-Veda* x. 72, 2: "Devānām pūrvye yuge asatah sadajāyata—in the first age of the gods the Manifested (*sat*) was born from the Unmanifested (*asat*)." In the same Veda (l. 96, 7), Agni is called *satas gopa*, the guardian of the existent world. The phraseology is much like Hegel's: (1) Das Absolute is das Seyn; (2) das Absolute ist das Nichts . . . Das reine Seyn ist nun die reine Abstraction, damit das absolut-negative, welches gleichfalls unmittelbar genommen, das Nichts ist." (*Die Lehre v. Seyn*, s. 99.)

good or evil fortune; united to me in soul by devotion and renunciation (of worldly good), thou, when freed (from the body), shalt come to Me.

I am the same to all beings; to Me none is hateful, and none is dear; but they who worship me devoutly are in Me and I also am in them.

30. Even if one of evil life worships Me with exclusive worship, he must be accounted as a good man, for he has judged rightly.

Soon he becomes a pious man and attains to eternal peace. Be well assured, O son of Kuntī! that he who worships Me does not perish.

For they who find refuge in Me, O son of Pritha! though they have been conceived in sin, women, too, Vaisyas, and even Sūdras, these go to the highest way.

How much more, then, holy Brāhmans and pious Rajarshis?[1]

Since thou hast come into this fleeting and unhappy world, worship Me.

Fix thy heart (*manas*) on Me: worship Me: offer to Me sacrifice: bow down before Me: united thus in soul (to Me), making Me the supreme object, thou shalt come to Me.

The doctrine of the *Bhagavat-Gita*, while closely connected, in some respects, with the *Vedânta*, is, in others, far removed from it. Upon this matter let me cite the very accurate and perspicuous observations of Mr. Davies:—

In the view (of the author of the Gita) the Supreme Being is One, without a rival, without such attributes as were assigned to the gods in the popular belief, and unstained by any of their passions or vices. From whatever source his ideas were derived, whether from some knowledge which came from a system lying wholly apart from the Hindū creed, or from the working of his own mind, he

[1] The *Rajarshis* (royal Rishes) united the characters of king and saint.

rose here to a height of conception far beyond the level of his age or his race. The unity of the divine nature was not wholly unknown to the Hindū mind, but practically this idea was buried under a mass of ritual, whose offices were assigned to many gods, of varying degrees of power and goodness. The One Supreme Spirit appears, indeed, incarnate as Krishna, and here our author's Brahmanic training appears; but in his proper spiritual nature he is "the supreme Brahmā, the supreme abode, the highest purification (the holiest of the holy, *Telang*), the Eternal Creative Power (*Purusha*) Divine, the Lord of Gods, Unborn, the mighty Lord (Vibhu)." (x. 12.) He is the source of all things, whether spirit or matter, the efficient and material cause of the whole universe. Here our author comes very near the pure Pantheism of the common Hindū creed. All souls are a part of Brahma's spiritual nature, individuated by their connection with bodily forms; but yet, having issued from him, they return, at least in their highest state, to him, to be absorbed in his infinite being. The existence and the immortality of the soul are asserted as truths which could be denied only by narrow-minded worldlings, in whom the pleasures of the senses had dulled every nobler faculty. The soul never began to be, it can never die, nor can it ever grow old (ii. 12, 13). At the death of the body, which is only the soul's fleshly covering, it enters into a new body. Taking with it the subtle body (*linga*), a surrounding frame composed of the subtler forms of matter, with which it enters another womb, where only the coarser animal frame is developed. This latter utterly perishes when the soul abandons it. The doctrine of metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls, is therefore distinctly taught. It is a doctrine which, more than any other, has gained a general acceptance in Eastern countries: it belongs equally to the system of Kapila and the most advanced Vedāntist school.

The Supreme Being is also the source of all material existences (x. 2, xiv. 3). In his exposition of this doctrine our author differs widely from the Sānkhya system and from the Mīmānsā or Vedāntist view. Kapila taught that Prakriti (Nature) was the material source of all beings or corporeal forms; soul being entirely distinct and eternal both as to the future and the past. In the Vedāntist school all bodily forms or material existences are mere illusion (māyā); a temporary appearance, like an image of the

moon in water, with which it has pleased the One Sole Being to veil for a time his purely spiritual nature. The watchword of this school is *adwaita*, or "non-dualism." Its creed is simplicity itself. In the Chhāndogya Upanishad (iii. 14) it is thus expressed: "All the universe is Brahmā; from him it proceeds, into him it is dissolved: in him it breathes." It is comprised in the simple formula, *Ekam evādwitīyam.* "One thing (essence) only, without a second." There is therefore, properly, neither cause nor effect. All that exists, or that seems to exist, is only Brahma. The difficult, or rather the impossible, problem of the origin of matter and of existing forms is set aside by a mere negation of matter, the only existence being the One Eternal Spirit. Here is a doctrine which lies in the absolutely opposite pole to that of many modern scientists, who can see in the varied forms of existence, and in the will, the intellect, and the affections of men, only different phases of matter. The system of our author, however, did not accord with any of these. In his view, Prakriti, or material Nature, was a part of the Supreme Being, in whom there was a duality in this respect, Prakriti being his lower nature. The term which Kapila applied to primeval matter, the ὕλη of the Greeks—*Avyakta*,[1] the Unmanifested or Undeveloped—is assigned to this element of the divine nature (ix. 4); hence all things are said to be from him (x. 8); all things are said to be in him; but he is not in them, *i.e.*, as a spiritual being; in that which gives him his peculiar name, he is not in them.

He is, however, in all as the Principle of Life (*jīvabhuta*), the living energy by which all things are animated (vii. 5); the undivided spiritual force which corresponds to the *anima mundi* of Western philosophers. Hence there are said to be two spiritual existences (*purusha*) in the world, the Divided, or the individual soul in each body, and the Undivided, the universal, vital principle referred to. "But," it is added, "there is another Spirit (*purusha*) the Highest, called the Supreme Soul" (*paramātman*); and Krishna, speaking of this Supreme Being, continues: "Wherefore, since I surpass the Divided and am above the Undivided, I am

[1] As distinguished from *Vyakta*, matter in a manifested, developed form.

called in the world and in the Vedas the Highest Spirit" (*purushottama*) (xv. 13, 17, 18). The Vedântist, who admits only one existence, affirms that the Jîvabhûta, or Principle of Life, and the Paramâtman, or Supreme Spirit, are absolutely one and the same; for the whole phenomenal world, and that which animates it, are only manifestations, and, with regard to phenomena, illusive manifestations, of the One Being. The Vedântist doctrine of illusion (*mâyâ*) which denies all true reality to the phenomenal world, is of late introduction. The word appears in the Gîtâ, but not in the Vedântist sense. The outer world is an illusion, not because it has no real existence, but because it veils the Spiritual Being who pervades all things; and men are thus deluded so far as to maintain that nothing exists except that which meets the senses. "I am not manifest to every one," Krishna says, "being enveloped by my mystic illusion. This deluded world does not recognise Me, the Unborn and Eternal" (vii. 25).[1]

So much must suffice as to those four of the chief religions of the world which may be called national or tribal. Let us now proceed to the two which claim universality. And first of Buddhism. Here the *Sacred Books* are of quite peculiar value, for what Mr. Rhys Davids calls "the discovery of early Buddhism" has placed all previous knowledge of the subject in an entirely new light. "I use the term discovery [he continues] advisedly, for, although Pâli texts have existed for many years in our public libraries, they are only now beginning to be understood; and the Buddhism of the Pâli *Pitakas* is not only a quite different thing from Buddhism as hitherto commonly received, but is

[1] The *Bhagavad Gîta* translated by John Davies, Introd. p. 4.

antagonistic to it[1]." I do not know how that difference and antagonism can be better illustrated than by a reference to the work of the late Mr. Maurice, of which I have already spoken. Struck, as well he might be, by the vast extent of Buddhism, the Boyle lecturer pleaded earnestly for its investigation. "The most prevailing religion which does exist, or ever has existed, must," he felt, "express some necessities of man's heart, some necessities of our own:" and, using the best authorities within his reach, he set himself to inquire what the chief facts about this religion were. The measure of success which attended his researches may best be judged of from the main conclusions at which he arrived. They were these: "That Buddhism is Theism in its highest form and conception," and that "Thibet must be regarded as its proper centre and home." We have travelled far since the day when these astounding views about the doctrine of Gotama were the best attainable by a man of the keen perceptions and wide sympathies of Mr. Maurice. The late Eugène Burnouf, in his *Introduction to the History of Buddhism*—which by the way Mr. Maurice seems just to have missed; it was published in 1844—may be fairly considered to have initiated its scientific study, and a goodly company of

[1] *Sacred Books*, vol. xi. Introd. p. xxv. Upon the question of the language used by the Buddha in his preaching some suggestive remarks will be found in the Preface to *The Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal* by Rājendralāla Mitra.

orientalists — English and French, German and Danish, Hindu and American—have followed in his wake. The general result of their laborious devotion has been to throw a flood of light where a generation ago there was darkness that might be felt. The religious literatures of Nepâl and Thibet, of China and Burma, are yielding up their secrets; and, although there are still large gaps in our knowledge, it is *knowledge* as far as it goes—not unsubstantial speculation nor nebulous conjecture. But by far the most important contribution to it has been furnished by Mr. Rhys Davids in his translations from the Pâli *Pitakas*—the three Baskets or Bodies of Tradition in which the canonical scriptures of the Southern Buddhist Church are comprised, and which unquestionably present to us the primitive form of the religion, "the belief of the earliest Buddhists—the Buddhists in India—as to what the original doctrines taught by the Buddha himself had been." How far that belief was well founded is a problem which probably, we may say certainly, will never be fully and exactly solved. But it may be solved in part and approximately. "Scholars will never be unanimously agreed on all points; but they will agree in ascribing some parts of the early Buddhist *Dharma* or doctrine only, to the early disciples, and, after allowing for all reasonable doubts, they will agree in ascribing other parts to the great Teacher himself."[1] Among the discourses

[1] *Sacred Books*, vol. xi. Introd. p. xxi.

which, at all events in substance, may be attributed to the Buddha is the *Dhammakakkappavattana-Sutta*, the Discourse upon the Foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness, given by Mr. Rhys Davids in the eleventh volume of the *Sacred Books*:—"It would be difficult [this great authority judges] to estimate too highly the historical value of this *Sutta*. There can be no reasonable doubt [he thinks] that the very ancient tradition accepted by all Buddhists as to the substance of the discourse is correct, and that we really have in it a summary of the words in which the great Indian thinker and reformer for the first time successfully promulgated his new ideas. It presents to us [he adds] in a few short and pithy sentences the very essence of that remarkable system which has had so profound an influence on the religious history of so large a portion of the human race."[1] For these reasons I shall quote the larger portion of it. But I should first mention the occasion upon which it was delivered. The Buddha, as the legend relates, had accomplished the six years of his hermit life of seclusion and mortification in the desert of Uruvâli, and had gone victoriously through the great conflict with Mâra, the Prince of the Power of the Air, under the sacred Bo tree on the banks of the Neranjarâ, which issued in his attaining the supreme intelligence. The forty days following

[1] *Sacred Books*, vol. xi. p. 146.

that momentous event were spent by him in an ecstacy of meditation. And then did he set out on his first evangelical journey to preach the law, "sweet, filling the soul with joy, and accessible only to the wise," whereby all beings may "free themselves from the influence of the five great passions, which is the source of all mutability."[1] To Benares did he direct his steps, and night had already fallen when he reached the Deer Park, three miles from that city. It was, as the Buddhists deem, the solemn entry upon his public ministry, the inauguration of the Kingdom of Righteousness which he had come into the world to set up; and their poets of every clime have vied with one another in endeavouring to express their sense of the importance of the occasion.

The evening was like a lovely maiden; the stars were the pearls upon her neck; the dark clouds her braided hair; the deepening space her flowing robe. As a crown she had the heavens where the gods dwell; these three worlds were as her body; her eyes were the white lotus flowers which open to the rising moon; and her voice as it were the humming of the bees. To do homage to the Buddha, and to hear the first preaching of his word, this lovely maiden came. The gods throng to hear the discourse until the heavens are empty; and the sound of their approach is like the rain of a storm; all the worlds in which there are sentient beings are made void of life, so that the congregation assembled

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[1] See *The Life or Legend of Gaudama*, by the Right Rev. P. Bigandet, Vicar Apostolic of Ava and Pegu, vol. i. p. 112. In Trübner's *Oriental Series*.

was in number infinite, but at the sound of the blast of the glorious trumpet of Sakka, the king of the gods, they became still as a waveless sea. And each of the countless listeners thought that the sage was looking towards himself, and was speaking to him in his own tongue, though the language used was Mâgadhi![1]

Then, turning to the five religious mendicants who had continued with him in the desert and afterwards had forsaken him, but now had repented and believed on him, did he deliver this sermon called *The Foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness:*

There are two extremes, O Bhikkhus,[2] which the man who has given up the world ought not to follow—the habitual practice, on the one hand, of those things whose attraction depends upon the passions, and especially of sensuality—a low and pagan way (of seeking satisfaction), unworthy, unprofitable, and fit only for the worldly-minded—and the habitual practice, on the other hand, of asceticism (or self-mortification), which is painful, unworthy, and unprofitable. There is a middle path, O Bhikkhus, avoiding these two extremes, discovered by the Tathâgata[3]—a path which opens the eyes and bestows understanding, which leads to peace of mind, to the higher wisdom, to full enlightenment, to Nirvâna! What is that middle path, O Bhikkhus, avoiding these two extremes, discovered by the Tathâgata—that path which opens the eyes, and

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[1] *Sacred Books*, vol. xi. p. 141. I translate "devas" by "gods": Mr. Rhys Davids gives "angels." The passage is taken from Hardy's *Manual of Buddhism*, p. 186.

[2] Religious mendicants who had forsaken all to follow the Buddha.

[3] An epithet of a Buddha. Prof. Fausböll in his translation of the *Suttâ Nipâta* (*Sacred Books*, vol. x.) translates it "perfect." But see Mr. Rhys Davids's note on this passage.

bestows understanding, which leads to peace of mind, to the higher wisdom, to full enlightenment, to Nirvâna? Verily! it is this noble eightfold path; that is to say:—

Right views;
Right aspirations;
Right speech;
Right conduct;
Right livelihood;
Right effort;
Right mindfulness; and
Right contemplation.

This, O Bhikkhus, is that middle path, avoiding these two extremes, discovered by the Tathâgata—that path which opens the eyes, and bestows understanding, which leads to peace of mind, to the higher wisdom, to full enlightenment, to Nirvâna!

Now this, O Bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning suffering.

Birth is attended with pain, decay is painful, disease is painful, death is painful. Union with the unpleasant is painful, painful is separation from the pleasant; and any craving that is unsatisfied, that too is painful. In brief, the five aggregates which spring from attachment (the conditions of individuality and their cause) are painful.[1]

This then, O Bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning suffering.

Now this, O Bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the origin of suffering.

Verily, it is that thirst (or craving), causing the renewal of existence, accompanied by sensual delight, seeking satisfaction now here, now there—that is to say, the craving for the gratification of the passions, or the craving for (a future) life, or the craving for success (in this present life).[2]

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[1] Mr. Rhys Davids has here this note:—"One might express the central thought of this First Noble Truth in the language of the nineteenth century by saying that pain results from existence as an individual. It is the struggle to maintain one's individuality which produces pain—a most pregnant and far-reaching suggestion."

[2] Upon this passage Mr. Rhys Davids comments as follows:—

This then, O Bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the origin of suffering.

Now this, O Bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the destruction of suffering.

Verily, it is the destruction in which no passion remains, of this very thirst; the laying aside of, the getting rid of, the being free from, the harbouring no longer of this thirst.

This then, O Bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the destruction of suffering.

Now this, O Bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the way which leads to the destruction of sorrow. Verily! it is this noble eightfold path; that is to say:—

Right views;
Right aspirations;

" 'The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life' correspond very exactly to the first and third of these three tanhâs. 'The lust of the flesh, the lust of life, and the pride of life,' or 'the lust of the flesh, the lust of life, and the love of this present world,' would be not inadequate renderings of all three. The last two are in Pâli bhava-tanhâ and vibhava-tanhâ, on which Childers, on the authority of Vigesinha, says, 'The former applies to the sassata-ditthi, and means a desire for an eternity of existence; the latter applies to the ukkheda-ditthi, and means a desire for annihilation in the very first (the present) form of existence.' Sassata-ditthi may be called the 'everlasting life heresy,' and ukkheda-ditthi the 'let-us-eat-and-drink-for-to-morrow-we-die heresy.' These two heresies, thus implicitly condemned, have very close analogies to theism and materialism. Spence Hardy says (*Manual of Buddhism*, p. 496):— 'Bhawatanhâ signifies the pertinacious love of existence induced by the supposition that transmigratory existence is not only eternal but felicitous and desirable. Wibhawa-tanhâ is the love of the present life, under the notion that existence will cease therewith, and that there is to be no future state. Vibhava in Sanskrit means, 1, development; 2, might, majesty, prosperity; and 3, property: but the technical Buddhist sense, as will be seen from the above, is something more than this.'"

Right speech;
Right conduct;
Right livelihood;
Right effort;
Right mindfulness; and
Right contemplation.

This then, O Bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the destruction of sorrow.

That this was the noble truth concerning sorrow, was not, O Bhikkhus, among the doctrines handed down, but there arose within me the eye (to perceive it), there arose the knowledge (of its nature), there arose the understanding (of its cause), there arose the wisdom (to guide in the path of tranquillity), there arose the light (to dispel darkness from it).

And again, O Bhikkhus, that I should comprehend that this was the noble truth concerning sorrow, though it was not among the doctrines handed down, there arose within me the eye, there arose the knowledge, there arose the understanding, there arose the wisdom, there arose the light.

And again, O Bhikkhus, that I had comprehended that this was the noble truth concerning sorrow, though it was not among the doctrines handed down, there arose within me the eye, there arose the knowledge, there arose the understanding, there arose the wisdom, there arose the light.

That this was the noble truth concerning the origin of sorrow, though it was not among the doctrines handed down, there arose within me the eye; but there arose within me the knowledge, there arose the understanding, there arose the wisdom, there arose the light.

And again, O Bhikkhus, that I should put away the origin of sorrow, though the noble truth concerning it was not among the doctrines handed down, there arose within me the eye, there arose the knowledge, there arose the understanding, there arose the wisdom, there arose the light.

And again, O Bhikkhus, that I had fully put away the origin of sorrow, though the noble truth concerning it was not among the doctrines handed down, there arose within me the eye, there arose

the knowledge, there arose the understanding, there arose the wisdom, there arose the light.

That this, O Bhikkhus, was the noble truth concerning the destruction of sorrow, though it was not among the doctrines handed down, but there arose within me the eye, there arose the knowledge, there arose the understanding, there arose the wisdom, there arose the light.

And again, O Bhikkhus, that I should fully realize the destruction of sorrow, though the noble truth concerning it was not among the doctrines handed down, there arose within me the eye, there arose the knowledge, there arose the understanding, there arose the wisdom, there arose the light.

And again, O Bhikkhus, that I had fully realised the destruction of sorrow, though the noble truth concerning it was not among the doctrines handed down, there arose within me the eye, there arose the knowledge, there arose the understanding, there arose the wisdom, there arose the light.

That this was the noble truth concerning the way which leads to the destruction of sorrow, was not, O Bhikkhus, among the doctrines handed down; but there arose within me the eye, there arose the knowledge, there arose the understanding, there arose the wisdom, there arose the light.

And again, O Bhikkhus, that I should become versed in the way which leads to the destruction of sorrow, though the noble truth concerning it was not among the doctrines handed down, there arose within me the eye, there arose the knowledge, there arose the understanding, there arose the wisdom, there arose the light.

And again, O Bhikkhus, that I had become versed in the way which leads to the destruction of sorrow, though the noble truth concerning it was not among the doctrines handed down, there arose within me the eye, there arose the knowledge, there arose the understanding, there arose the wisdom, there arose the light.

So long, O Bhikkhus, as my knowledge and insight were not quite clear regarding each of these four noble truths in this triple order, in this twelvefold manner—so long was I uncertain whether I had attained to the full insight of that wisdom which is unsur-

passed in the heavens or on earth, among the whole race of Samanas and Brâhmans, or of gods or men.

But as soon, O Bhikkhus, as my knowledge and insight were quite clear regarding each of these four noble truths, in this triple order, in this twelvefold manner—then did I become certain that I had attained to the full insight of that wisdom which is unsurpassed in the heavens or on earth, among the whole race of Samanas and Brâhmans, or of gods or men.

And now this knowledge and this insight has arisen within me. Immovable is the emancipation of my heart. This is my last existence. There will now be no rebirth for me.[1]

So much must serve as a sample of the Buddhistic literature to which the *Sacred Books* introduce us. The time would fail me to draw out even the outlines of the system which they present to us. Nor is it possible for me to say anything of the later developments which that system received. But before I pass on I would make three remarks. The first is, that, Thibet—so far from being the centre and proper home of Buddhism, as Mr. Maurice supposed,—exhibits to us only one of the latest and most curious transformations of the Buddha's teaching. The Turanian worshippers of the Grand Lama have about as much in common with primitive Buddhists as Mormons have in common with primitive Christians. Again, Buddhism not only is not "the highest form of Theism," but is not, in Mr. Maurice's sense, Theistic at all. Atheistic it certainly is not, nor is it Anti-theistic, whether in the form of Materialism or Agnosticism.

[1] *Sacred Books*, vol. xi. pp. 146-153.

Its first position is the unreality of the phenomenal world, and its strongest sanctions are drawn from the unseen and supersensual realities hidden from us by the "muddy vesture of decay" which doth "so closely hem us in." It might, with much reason, be described as Pantheistic, insisting, as it does, on the oneness of all life. Of the supreme creative personal Deity of the great Semitic faiths it—like the other Aryan religions—is ignorant. The Almighty Power ruling over gods and men is, as it teaches, Law, inexorably just and absolutely perfect: "a power not ourselves, a stream of tendency that makes for righteousness." Thirdly, as I have already noted,[1] Buddhism, like Zoroastrianism, was a reform, ethical and religious, based upon what has been called "the twofold doctrine of the *Karman*, *i.e.*, the act by which the soul determines its own destiny, and of the *Punarbhava*, *i.e.*, the successive rebirths in which it undergoes that destiny," so deeply rooted in the Indian mind when Gotama entered upon his ministry. It was, indeed, more than this. There was a new element in it. But it was also a going back to older and purer conceptions than those commonly current in the age when it arose. Like the authors of the *Upanishads* Buddha attaches supreme importance to knowledge. As we saw in the *Discourse upon the Foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness*, the very basis of

[1] See page 31.

his doctrine is the Noble Eightfold Path "which opens the eyes, which bestows understanding, which leads to peace of mind, to the higher wisdom, to full enlightenment, to *Nirvâna.*" But, unlike the earlier sages, Buddha places this knowledge not in apprehension of the Absolute, but in a clear perception of the facts of the three worlds: in discernment of the true character of the universal law and conformity thereto. Thus, in the sermon entitled "*Dvayatânupassanâ Sutta,*" which we find in the *Mahâvagga,* he leads his disciples to the understanding of the two laws (*dhamma*) relating to pain and the origin of pain:—

Those who do not understand pain and the origin of pain, and where pain wholly and totally is stopped, and do not know the way that leads to the cessation of pain,

They, deprived of the emancipation of thought and the emancipation of knowledge, are unable to put an end to transmigration, they will verily continue to undergo birth and decay.

And those who understand pain and the origin of pain, and where pain wholly and totally is stopped, and who know the way that leads to the cessation of pain,

They, endowed with the emancipation of thought and the emancipation of knowledge, are able to put an end to transmigration, they will not undergo birth and decay.[1]

And the sermon thus ends—

Form, sound, taste, smell, and touch are all wished for, pleasing and charming things as long as they last; so it is said.

By you, by the world of men and gods, these things are deemed a pleasure, but when they cease it is deemed pain by them.

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[1] *Sacred Books,* vol. x. part ii. p. 132.

By the noble the cessation of the existing body is regarded as pleasure; this is the opposite of what the wise in all the world hold. What fools say is pleasure that the noble say is pain, what fools say is pain that the noble know as pleasure:—see here is a thing difficult to understand, here the ignorant are confounded.

For those that are enveloped there is gloom, for those that do not see there is darkness, and for the good it is manifest, for those that see there is light; even being near, those that are ignorant of the way and the law, do not discern anything.

By those that are overcome by the passions of existence, by those that follow the stream of existence, by those that have entered the realm of Mâra (the prince of evil), this law is not perfectly understood.

Who except the noble deserve the well-understood state (of Nirvâna)? Having perfectly conceived this state, those free from passion are completely extinguished.[1]

The Buddha proclaims most emphatically the free agency and moral responsibility of man—as we have seen his doctrine of *Karma* rests on these truths[2]—and calls upon all to work out their salvation, by purity, detachment, and universal love and pity. "For the first time in the history of the world (Mr. Rhys Davids observes,) Buddhism proclaimed a salvation which each man could gain for himself, and by himself in this world, during this life, without having the least reference to God or gods, either great or small."[3] And the way to gain it is by overcoming delusion and sin, as the Master himself had overcome, for the Buddha's conflict with Mâra is the type and figure of his disciples' daily warfare. Victory over the passions, suppression of evil

[1] *Sacred Books*, vol. x. part ii. p. 144.
[2] See p. 27.
[3] *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 29.

thoughts, meditation on the seven kinds of wisdom,[1] fixed attention, or, as it is sometimes called, right effort—these are the four main practices of the higher life enjoined by the Buddhist theologians. But all rests upon the deep conviction that a Supremely Righteous Law rules in the universe of decay and death, and that deliverance, whether partial or entire, from the evil inseparable from separate existence, is only to be obtained by conformity with that law. And thus in expounding to his hearers the *Story of the Holy Quail* the Buddha declares "In this world there is such a thing as the efficacy of virtue; there is such a thing as the efficacy of truth. There are men, known as omniscient Buddhas, who become Buddhas when seated under the Bo-tree through having fulfilled the Great Virtues in the long ages of the past; who have gained salvation by the wisdom arising from good deeds and earnest thought, and have gained, too, the power of showing to others the knowledge of that salvation; who are full of truth, and compassion, and mercy, and long suffering; and whose hearts reach out in equal love to all things that have life." This, he declares, is "the One Eternal and Truth Faith."[2] And upon another occasion, we

[1] There are:—1. Energy. 2. Thought. 3. Contemplation. 4. Investigation of Scripture. 5. Joy. 6. Repose. 7. Serenity.

[2] *Buddhist Birth Stories*, vol. i. p. 304. These fascinating *Jâtaka Tales*—the oldest collection of Folk-Lore in the world—are not only a priceless record of the earliest imaginative literature of

read, "the Blessed One opening his lotus mouth, as if he were opening a jewel casket, scented with heavenly perfume and full of sweet smelling odours, sending forth his pleasant tones," spake thus: "Life according to the Truth confers the three happy conditions of existence here below, and the six joys of the Brahmalokas in the heaven of delight, and finally leads to the attainment of Arahatship: but life, according to the Untruth, leads to rebirth in the four hells, and among the five lowest grades of man."[1] So, also, in the *Book of the Great Decease* we read, the Master told his disciples, the day after he had prophesied to them his approaching death,—

It is through not understanding and grasping four truths,[2] O brethren, that we have had to run so long, to wander so long, in this weary path of transmigration, both you and I.

And what are these four?

The noble conduct of life, the noble earnestness in meditation, the noble kind of wisdom, and the noble salvation of freedom. But when noble conduct is realized and known, when noble meditation is realized and known, when noble wisdom is realized and known,

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our race, but are also of singular interest and importance as a document of the period when Buddhism was in its first fervour; when the idea of its founder was still growing, and his doctrine was still fructifying in the minds of his disciples; when his Church was still able to take up and incorporate external materials.

[1] *Ibid.* p. 146.

[2] Or conditions (*Dhammâ*). They must, of course, be carefully distinguished from the Four Noble Truths, of which a full exposition has been presented in the sermon on *The Foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness*, pp. 151-156.

when noble freedom is realized and known, then is the craving for existence rooted out, that which leads to renewed existence is destroyed, and there is no more birth.[1]

It is customary to regard Buddhism as a decadent faith. Thus Dr. Edkins, in his valuable volume of sketches—historical, descriptive, and critical—of that religion, speaks of it as having fallen into "helplessness and decay"; and he further expresses the opinion that its decay is hopeless, and that its weakness is growing.[2] On the other hand, a recent writer goes so far as to make the singular suggestion that Buddhism may perhaps be "that one of all the world's great creeds that is destined to be the religion of the future."[3] What is certain is, that of all the three "universal" religions, Buddhism now least exhibits that missionary activity which is perhaps the most infallible sign of religious vitality. It may, and doubtless does, appeal powerfully to a certain class of minds among contemporary European thinkers. But, speaking

[1] *Sacred Books*, vol. xi. p. 65.

[2] *Chinese Buddhism*, pp. 1, 2.

[3] "The signs abound that of all the world's great creeds that one is destined to be the much-talked-of religion of the future which shall be found in least antagonism with Nature and with law. Who dare predict that Buddhism will not be the one chosen?"—*A Buddhist Catechism*, by Henry S Olcott, President of the Theosophical Society. Preface.

broadly, it may be said to have ceased for centuries to advance. Far otherwise is it with the faith of Islâm. Muslim missionaries are at the present time doing a vast work of successful proselytism among the barbarous tribes of Central Africa, which sufficiently shows how far the monotheistic movement initiated by Mohammed is from having spent its force; and a recent writer, whose long experience in Southern India gives peculiar weight to his words, tells us that in his judgment "the Church has hardly yet realised how great a barrier the system of Islâm is to her onward march in the East."[1] Regarding the doctrinal system and practical obligations of Islâm, little has recently been added to our knowledge, and little remains to be added. The version of the *Qur'ân* contributed to the series of *Sacred Books* by the late Professor Palmer, certainly possesses the merit of setting before the reader more plainly than any previous version what the original really is and what it contains; and the learned Introduction which he has prefixed to it is of great value. Perhaps our chief gain of late years towards a proper comprehension of Mohammedanism has been the more accurate and intelligent appreciation of the character of Mohammed,

[1] *The Faith of Islâm*, by the Rev Edward Sell, Introd. p. xii. I do not know exactly what Mr. Sell intends by "the Church," but his general meaning is clear. Let me here bear testimony to the great value of his work from which I quote.

which has become general. A few centuries ago our ancestors identified him with the devil:—

> The prince of darkness is a gentleman,
> Modo he's called and Mahu.[1]

I suppose few people now who have considered the matter in the light of the evidence available to us would maintain this view of the Dreamer of the Desert, or would even pronounce him a conscious impostor. "That he himself thoroughly believed in the reality of his revelation"—Professor Palmer justly observes—"there can be no doubt, especially during the early part of his prophetic career." And again, "In forming our estimate of Mohammed's character, and of the religion which we are accustomed to call by his name, we must put aside the theories of imposture and enthusiasm," although "in his later history" the Professor thinks "there are evidences of that tendency to pious fraud which the profession of a prophet necessarily involves."[2] However that may be, there can be no question what an unspeakably valuable comment upon the *Qur'án* is afforded by what we now know of its author; of the ascetic simplicity of his habits, his indulgence to his inferiors, his fondness for children, the frankness of his friendships, the nobleness of his generosity, the dauntlessness of his courage, the sweetness and

[1] *i.e.* Mahound or Mohammed.

[2] *Sacred Books*, vol. vi. Introd. p. xlvi.

winningness of his look and discourse, his indifference to the praise of men. No really fruitful study of the religion of Islâm is well possible if it be viewed apart from the person of its founder. It is with spiritual births as with physical. As the tree is, so is the fruit. The child is like the parent. There is, however, one very fruitful field of inquiry in connection with Islâm, which has as yet been little explored by European scholars, and to which I wish to direct attention — I can pretend to do little more than that — I mean its hagiology. Dogma and duty are not the whole of a religion. There are in our nature needs of loving and of suffering, as well as of believing and of doing; and no faith that does not contain something to satisfy these needs could ever have wielded that vast power which, as a matter of fact, has been and is being exercised by Mohammedanism. Hence the importance of the school to which the name of Sûfîs is generally given. M. Dozy well remarks: "The influence which Sûfism has exercised over the Musalman world, and which in our own days is rather increasing than diminishing, has been extremely great"; and M. de Kremer considers it "the preponderating element in Musalman civilization." Sûfism has furnished Mohammedanism with its saints; and it is in the saints of a religion that the spiritual instincts and characteristics of its votaries are most clearly and faithfully imaged. But the Sûfîs have not been merely the saints of Islâm;

they have been also its sages and its singers. Muslim poetry is, for the most part, the expression of Muslim mysticism. Muslim philosophy has sprung out of Muslim theology.

It is to the very days of the prophet himself that we must go back for the rise of the spiritual movement which was so greatly to affect his religion; and, as Dr. Pusey has judiciously observed, the speedy growth of mystical doctrine in the thin and arid soil of Mohammedanism bears eloquent witness to the need innate in the human mind of finding some object, exterior to itself, of union with God.[1] It must not be forgotten, however, that

[1] The following interesting remarks occur in Dr. Pusey's preface to the second part of Nicoll's Cat. of MSS. in the Bodleian:—"Adnotavi præterea (quotiescunque id mihi innotuit), qui scriptores, quæve opera è Sufiorum scholâ profecta essent quippe quorum ingenia atque proprietates, à Tholuckio jam optimè reseratas, penitus perspectas habuisse, Christiano nomini, ut mihi quidem videtur, aliquantum saltem proderit. Eam enim doctrinam ex arido atque exili Mohammedanismi solo tam cito esse enatam, res est per se admiratione digna, quæque desiderium illud, menti humanæ ingenitum, disertè attestatur, quo extra se proripitur et cum Deo rursus conjungi, necessitate quâdam naturæ, vehementer cupit; nobis porro ob frigus illud, quo subinde opprimimur, pudorem merito incuteret alienorum fervor; multum denique interesse mihi visum est, eos qui Mohammedanos, Persas vero præsertim, ex erroribus suis revocare studuerint, verum, quod in horum placitis insit, à falso distinguere, et pro adminiculo quodam veritatis Christianae uti scire." I am indebted for this quotation to Professor Cowell's very valuable article on Persian Literature in *Oxford Essays* 1855, p. 162. The work of Tholuck to which Dr Pusey refers in the very erudite *Ssufismus*, the edition of which before me is dated "Berolini, MDCCCXXI."

there was a strong vein of enthusiasm in the Prophet of Islâm, bald and austere as was the monotheism taught by him. Yes, and we may safely affirm a strong vein of asceticism too, in spite of the licence which he permitted himself in the matter of his wives—a licence to be judged rather by the Patriarchal than by the Evangelical standard, and with due regard to the habits and traditions of his age and country. Certain it is that there are passages in the *Qur'ân*—the transcript, be it remembered, of its author's mind—in which warrant may be found for those mystical tendencies so strongly displayed by some of Mohammed's dearest friends and companions, especially by Ali, the son of Abû Tâlib, and which find their natural issue in the life of poverty, mortification, and detachment. It is, however, in Taûs Abû 'Abdi-'r-Rahmân, who died in the year 102 of the Mohammedan era, that we should perhaps discern the true founder of Islamite asceticism. The friend of Zaynu-'l-'Abidîn, Ali's grandson, the pupil of Abû Hurayra, the devoutest of the prophet's friends, and of Ibn 'Abbâs, renowned alike for his profound learning and his spotless life, Taûs was the guide and oracle of a school of disciples whom he trained in mortification, poverty, contempt of the world, and the various spiritual arts and devout practices of the contemplative life. He it was who first adopted the high cap of woollen *(sûf)* whence the religious of Islâm were to derive their commonest

appellation of *Sûfi*, and the *Khirqa*, or long patched robe, which is their distinctive habit. Of his numerous successors whose praise fills the second of the Mohammedan centuries, some continuing to dwell at Mekka, while others carried back to their own lands the spiritual discipline they had learned there, the time would fail me to speak. Among the most famous of them was Ibnu-'s-Semmâk, the eloquent and indefatigable preacher, whose fine saying, "Fear God as though you had never obeyed Him, and hope in Him as though you had never sinned against Him," has become widely known beyond the limits of his own communion. It was in this second century of Islâm that Muslim dervishes first received a common rule from Fudhayl Abû 'Ali Talikani of Khorâsân, who had begun life as a common highway robber. The story of his conversion is worth telling. It was in an hour when he was bent upon the gratification of a lawless passion—he was concealed upon the roof of the house where the girl who was the object of it dwelt—that the verse of the *Qur'ân*, recited by some pious person in the neighbourhood, fell upon his ear: "Is it not high time for those who believe to open their hearts to compunction?" and the words sank into his soul, and smote him down in masterful contrition. "Yea, Lord," he exclaimed, "it is indeed high time"; and at once awaking from his dream of sin he passed the night in profound meditation. The next morning he assumed

the ragged robe of the religious mendicant, and in time became widely celebrated for his sanctity and wonderful works, and drew to himself many disciples, to whom he gave a rule of life, the original of the monastic institute of Islâm. His favourite virtue is said to have been the love of God in perfect conformity with His holy will. It is related in his history, that upon one occasion, being asked by the luxurious Khalîfa Hârûnu-'r-Rashîd, "Have you ever met with any one of greater detachment than yourself?" he made answer "Yes, O Khalîfa; your detachment exceeds mine, [illegible] have only detached myself from this little world doomed to perdition, while you seem to have detached yourself from the world which is infinite and shall endure for ever." The third son of that great monarch was of a very different spirit from his father. When a mere youth, Prince Ahmed, overcome by the sweetness of the life of self-renunciation, withdrew from the splendours of the court of Bagdâd, and went secretly to Basra, where he dwelt, unknown, among the poorest of the poor, his bed a piece of matting, his pillow a stone, working with his own hands for his daily subsistence, and taking no thought for the morrow, for what was left after he had satisfied the bare necessities of the body he bestowed in alms. This St. Alexius of Islâm died at twenty, his delicate frame quite worn out by his austerities. But before he passed away he sent to the Khalîfa the one relic of his former

rank which he had retained, a precious jewel, given him by his mother Zubayda, with the message: "He who sends thee this, wishes thee such happiness at thy last hour as he himself enjoys." Fudhayl's successor in the generalship of his order, Bishr the Barefooted, was, like himself, a reclaimed sinner. The legend tells us that his conversion was on this wise. One day, as he was walking in the streets of Bagdâd, he saw a piece of paper, upon which was written the most holy Name of God, lying on the ground. He picked it up, and took it home with him to preserve it from profanation, and in the night he heard a voice, "Bishr, thou hast honoured my Name, and I will honour thine, in this world and in the world to come." Next day he entered upon the life of penance. His greatest trial is said to have arisen from the praise of men. "O God," he would pray, "save me from this glory, the requital of which may be confusion in another life." The great light of Mohammedan monasticism in the third century is Dhû-'n-Nûn, the Egyptian, of whose supernatural powers such striking narratives remain, and whose singular intrepidity in rebuking wickedness in high places signally illustrates the virtues of which he is held by Muslim hagiologists to be the special type—confidence in God and contempt of the world. His scourgings and revilings, his chains and bitter bondage, only drew from him, as his biographer relates, expressions of joy that he was counted worthy to

suffer thus for God. Three things are said to have been the subject of his constant prayer—that he might never have any certainty of the morrow's subsistence; that he might never be in honour among men; and that he might see God's face in mercy at the hour of death. He was buried at Cairo, where his shrine still attracts numerous pilgrims. In the next century we come upon the great name of the martyr Hosan-el-Hallâj. He suffered at Bagdâd in the year 303 of the Hijra, "though not until he had founded a new and well-defined school of doctrine, destined to count among its professors in later times three names of gigantic reputation and influence in the East—the ascetic 'Abdu-'l-Qâdiri-'l-Gîlânî, the doctor Muhyi-'d-Dîn, Ibnu-'l 'Arabiyyi-'l-Magribî, and the poet 'Umar Ibnu-'l-ridh, author of the celebrated *Divan*, unrivalled in depth and beauty."[1] It is related of him that "his fasts were prolonged to three or four continuous days, and were accompanied by ecstacies, in which he was often seen raised from the earth and surrounded by light." The distinctive note of his teaching was the freedom of the human will, a tenet which aroused against him much theological

[1] *Home and Foreign Review*, vol. iv. p. 571. I am glad to acknowledge my indebtedness to the very able paper on *Asceticism amongst Mohammedan Nations*—it is commonly attributed to Mr. W. G. Palgrave—whence these words are cited, and from which much of the matter of this and the two preceeding pages has been obtained.

animosity. He was put to death with circumstances of revolting cruelty, and his last utterances amid his torments were an exhortation to those who stood around not to allow the spectacle to make them doubt of the Divine goodness: "God herein treats me as a friend treats his friend: He passes to me the cup of suffering of which He has first drunk Himself"—an enigmatical saying in the mouth of a Muslim, lending some colour to the accusation of covert Christian teaching brought against the martyr.

I cannot follow further, even in this fragmentary outline, the long catalogue of Muslim saints. I go on to consider their doctrine, which presents a curious analogy to much that we find in the writings of Christian mystics; although, of course, differences of the most far-reaching kind also exist. I do not know where a better compendium of it, in its practical aspect, is to be found than in the *Pend-Nâma*, or Book of Counsels of Farîdu-'d-Dîn, 'Attâr, of which we owe an excellent translation, enriched with copious and profoundly erudite notes, to M. Silvestre de Sacy. The author of this poem, or, as we should rather say, religious manual in verse, was himself an eminent saint. His biographer, Dawlatshâh of Samarcand, tells us that in the practice of the divine precepts he had no equal: that for his

tender piety, his affectionate and loving devotion, he was reckoned the light of his age: that he was submerged in the ocean of the knowledge of God, plunged in the sea of the Divine Intuition. Born in the year 513 of the Hijra, the son of a rich trader in spices and drugs, he succeeded to his father's business on coming to man's estate, and prosperously carried it on, until one day, as he was standing among his bales, surrounded by his clerks and servants, a holy anchorite appeared before him at the door, and gazed around with strange, wild eyes, which soon filled with tears. 'Attâr sharply rebuked him for his seeming curiosity, and bade him go away. "That is easily done," said the dervish; "I have little to bear along with me: nothing but this poor habit. But you—when the time comes for you to go away, with all this costly merchandise, how will you set about it? You would do well to arrange, before that inevitable hour arrives, about packing up your treasures." An old and well-worn argument, which sufficed for 'Attâr, as it has sufficed for millions before and since. Was it with him as with the knight of the Arthurian romance, listening to the nun who had seen the Holy Grail:—

> . . . . and as she spake,
> She sent the deathless passion in her eyes
> Through him: and made him hers, and laid her mind
> On him: and he believed in her belief.

It may well have been. The word the historian uses of the ascetic signifies—"he who is illumi-

nated," and whose light in turn attracts others. 'Attâr was not disobedient to the heavenly calling. "He forsook all that he had, renounced entirely the business of the world, and betook himself to penance. From a captive fast bound in the chains of ambition and lucre, he became the prisoner of sorrow, but a sorrow which leads to true liberty." Entering the monastery of the venerable sheikh Ruknu-'d-Dîn-Asaf, who was then one of the most distinguished masters of the contemplative life, he gave himself up wholly to the things of God, and at the close of his days he was held to have attained to the highest degree of spirituality that can be reached in this world—that seventh stage described by himself in words to which I shall refer later on. We owe to him the Lives of the Saints of the order to which he belonged, and mystical poems which hold a high place in Persian literature. His life of piety was crowned by martyrdom at the hands of the Mogul invaders under Jengîz Khân. His *Pend-Nâma*, with which I am immediately concerned, appears to have been composed for some beloved disciple, who is addressed throughout it as "My Friend," "My Brother," and more frequently, "My Son." In reading it we are reminded at one time of the *Imitation*, at another of the *Spiritual Combat*, and again of the Sapiential books of the Christian canon. He begins by invoking the name of God—the All Bountiful and All Merciful, essentially Holy in His Nature, and exempt by His

Attributes from all imperfection. Next the Prophet is celebrated: and then there are verses in honour of the seven chief doctors of Islâm. A confession of sin and prayer for pardon follows, conceived in a strain of intense realization, on the one hand, of the corruption of human nature as seen in the light of the Divine perfections; and, on the other, of the illimitable mercy of God. "Thou doest only good. We have done very wickedly. Every instant of our existence has been marked by new faults. We have never once obeyed Thy laws with a heart entirely submissive and content. A fugitive slave, I approach thy gate. Shame hath covered my face. But Thyself hast commanded Thy servants not to give themselves up to despair.[1] Thou shalt purify me from my sins before Thou turnest me again to the dust." The fifth chapter treats of the battle which must be delivered to inordinate affection and corrupt inclinations, and celebrates the excellence of voluntary poverty, to which nothing is preferable, of obedience, of mortification, of detachment from all created things—the indispensable instrument of true and everlasting felicity. And so throughout the seventy-nine chapters of the work the praises of these virtues constantly recur, and their necessity is insisted upon. The sixth chapter, upon the advan-

[1] The reference is to the verse of the *Qur'ân*: "Servants of God, who have destroyed your own souls by your iniquity, despair not of His mercy: for there is no sin which He pardoneth not. He is forgiving and merciful."—S. xxxix. v. 53.

tages of silence, might have been written by a Trappist. "My brother," it counsels, "if thou seekest the Lord, never open thy lips but to pronounce His commandments." "Speak not, my brother, but to set forth his praise." "Silence is the exercise of the wise." "In the multitude of words is the death of the soul." I cannot linger over the exhortations of 'Attâr to purity of intention, to humility, to modesty—"the man who knows not how to blush belongs to the company of Satan," he avers—to patient continuance in well-doing and endurance of injury, to charity to all God's creatures, to confidence in God—"take no thought for the morrow; He who makes thee see to-morrow will take thought for its needs"—to perpetual celebration of the divine praises. All the members of the body, he points out, have their proper office of praise to Him who made it: the hand in succouring those oppressed by the weight of their burden; the feet in visiting the afflicted; the eye in shedding tears through fear of God's judgments, or in considering the works of His omnipotence; the ear in listening to His word; the tongue in reading the precepts of the *Qur'ân*, or in reciting His doxologies. "The thought of God," he teaches, "is the true food of the soul: the only medicine for the wounds of the heart." Very striking is his chapter on that knowledge of God which is the fruit of contemplation—the name given to one devoted to the contemplative life, I

may note in passing, is "he who knows the Lord Most High." This, the author insists, is the only science: he who is devoid of it is not worthy to be reckoned among men. But he who possesses it has no place in his heart, save for God only. And he goes on: "Come, I will show thee what the world is like. It is like a phantom which a man sees in sleep. And when he awakes no profit remains to him from his sweet illusion. So, when death comes and wakes us from the dream of life, we carry away with us nothing of the good things we have enjoyed in this world." And in another place he likens the world to an outworn beauty, who decks herself as a young bride and ever seeks to attract a new lover. Happy the man, he says, who has turned his back upon her and her seductions, and has bidden her an eternal divorce.

So much as to this *Book of Counsels*, to which, for its virility, its simplicity, its directness, its elevation, may well be assigned a high place among Manuals of Piety. To a Christian, of course, it presents one radical defect—the defect which, even before his conversion, repelled St. Augustine from certain philosophical writings, the high excellence of which he fully felt: "that the saving Name of Christ was not mentioned therein."[1] But, although the Name of Him by whose mission to the world was "manifested the love of God towards us" is

[1] S. August. *Confes.* l. v. c. 14.

absent from the pages of 'Attâr, that love, nevertheless, is their main theme and the source of their inspiration. It will have been seen, from what I have quoted from the *Pend-Nâma*, that the only worthy object of life, according to the Sûfîs, is union with the Divine Essence, and in the road to this supreme goal they reckon seven stages, of which, under the designation of the Seven Valleys, 'Attâr has given an account in his mystical poem, *Mantiqu-'t-Tayr*—"The Colloquy of the Birds."[1] One of the birds says to the lapwing: O thou who knowest the road that leads to the palace of the great king tell me, dear companion—for our eyes are covered with darkness in gazing upon it—tell me how many parasangs long it is. There are seven valleys to pass through, replies the dear companion; but, since no traveller who has arrived at that blessed bourne has ever returned, no one knows how many parasangs long the way is. Ah, foolish one! since they have all lost themselves in a fathomless ocean, how should they come back to tell thee what they have seen? But listen. First, there is the Valley of the Quest: painful and toilsome is that valley; and there for years mayst thou dwell, stripping thy soul bare of all earthly attachment, indifferent to forms of faith or unfaith, until the Light of the Divine Essence casts a ray upon

[1] See chapters xxxviii. to xliv. I have before me the excellent edition of this poem—the Persian text with a French translation—of M. Garcin de Tassy (Paris, 1857).

thy desolation. Then, when thy heart has been set on fire, shalt thou enter the second valley—the Valley of Love—a valley that has no limits. Next is the Valley of Knowledge, which has no beginning, neither ending. There each who enters is enlightened, so far as he is able to bear it, and finds in the contemplation of truth the place which belongs to him. The mystery of the essence of being is revealed to him. He sees the almond within its shell; he sees God under all the things of sense: or rather he sees nothing but Him whom he loves. But, for one who has attained to these mysteries, how many millions have turned aside out of the way upon the road! The fourth valley is the Valley of Sufficiency,[1] where God is all in all: where the contemplation of the Divinity is the one reality, and all things else, sensible or intellectual, are absorbed in nothingness. The fifth valley is the Valley of the Unity;[2] there the Divine Essence, independent of its attributes, is the object of contemplation. Thence the elect soul passes to the sixth valley: the Valley of Amazement: a dolorous region where, blind with excess of light from the revelation of the Unity, it gropes its way in pain and confusion. He who has the Unity graven on his heart forgets all else and himself also. Should

[1] Or, as M. Garcin de Tassy renders it, "Independence." He who attains to this stage is called by the mystical theologians of Islâm *'Arif*, "one who knows."

[2] This is also called *Hâl*, *the* State, or *Wajd*, Ecstacy.

any man say to such an one, Art thou annihilated or existent, or both or neither? Art thou thyself or not thyself? he would reply: I know nothing at all, not even that I know nothing. I love; but I know not whom I love. I am neither Muslim nor infidel. What am I then? What say I? I have no knowledge of my love. My heart is at the same time full and empty. Last stage of all is the Valley of Annihilation of Self: of complete Poverty[1]—the seventh and supreme degree, which no human words can describe. There is the great ocean of Divine Love. The world present and the world to come are but as figures reflected in it. And, as it rises and falls, how can they remain? He who plunges in that sea, and is lost in it, finds perfect peace.

Such are the seven stages in the scale of perfection, as the Muslim masters of the spiritual life teach: and such is the goal to which they conduct; a goal not unlike the *Nirvâna* of the Buddhists.[2] Saadî, in his Third Conference, relates an incident

[1] This is the common term among the Muslim mystics for the highest degree of the contemplative life: absolute quietism; the praises of which are thus sung by an Arab poet, quoted by M. Silvestre de Sacy (p. 304): "Poverty is the substance; all else is but accident; poverty is health, all else is sickness; the whole world is illusion and falsity; poverty only is an excellent possession and real riches."

[2] So M. Renan: "Sept degrès, disent les Soufis, mènent l'homme jusqu'au terme, qui est la *disparition* de la *disparition*, le Nirvana buddique par l'anéantissement de personalité."—*L'Averroes*, p. 112.

from the life of a widely renowned saint, which may be fitly cited here in illustration of this teaching:—

One night Abû Yezîd Bestâmî, being alone in his cell and plunged in ecstacy, cried out in his vivid apprehension of the feebleness and impotence of human nature, "O my God, when shall I unite myself to Thee? O God most High, how long wilt Thou leave me to consume away in this cruel separation? When wilt Thou give me the wine of Thy enjoyment?" Then a voice from out of the impenetrable abode of the Divine Majesty sounded above his head, and he heard the words, "Abû Yezîd, thy Thou is still with thee. If thou wilt attain unto Me, quit thyself and come."

And so Jelâlu-'D-Dîn, the great Muslim saint and teacher, in the *Mesnevî*:—

One knocked at the door of the Beloved, and a voice from within said: "Who is there?" Then he answered: "*It is I.*" The voice replied: "This house will not hold *me* and *thee!*" So the door remained shut. The lover retired to a wilderness, and spent some time in solitude, fasting, and prayer. One year elapsed, when he again returned, and knocked at the door. "Who is there?" said the voice. The lover answered, "*It is thou.*" Then the door was opened.

It is under this allegorical veil that the Sûfîs ordinarily expound their doctrines, for the setting forth of which they find the vulgar speech of this working-day world inadequate. As Jelâl elsewhere says, "They profess eager desire, but with no carnal affection; and circulate the cup, but no material goblet: since all things are spiritual, all is mystery within mystery." Thus does he interpret the deeper signification of the four pillars of the

Mohammedan faith—the great duties of worship, almsgiving, fasting, and pilgrimage.

Oh! thou who layest a claim to Islam,
Without the inner meaning thy claim hath no stability.
Learn what are the pillars of the Mussulman's creed,—
Fasting, pilgrimage, prayer and alms;
Know that fasting is abstinence from the fashions of mankind,
For in the eye of the soul this is the true mortification.
Pilgrimage to the place of the wise
Is to find escape from the flame of separation.
Alms are the flinging at His feet
All else beside Him in the whole range of possibilities.
Depart from self that thou may'st be joined to Him,
Wash thy hands of self that thou may'st obtain thy prayer.
If thou fulfillest these four "pillars of *Islam*,"
In the path of religion (*deen*) a thousand souls of mine are thy ransom![1]

One of the great offences of the Sûfîs in the eyes of Muslim orthodoxy is their attitude towards religions other than the Mohammedan. There is a proverbial saying, often quoted by their writers, which literally rendered means, "A Sûfî knows no religion," and which their adversaries take literally, while they themselves expound it to signify, "A Sûfî thinks ill of no religion." It cannot be doubted that, at all events, the more advanced of them in the mystical doctrine, consider religious systems to be merely instruments, whereby is expressed, faintly and inadequately at the best, celestial melody, or, as the Germans would say,

[1] Translated from the *Mesnevi*, by Professor Cowell, *Oxford Essays*, 1855, p. 171.

Vorstellungsarten, "modes of representation," some better, some worse, but all imperfect. Thus, while themselves scrupulously observing the precepts of Islâm, they regard other forms of faith with benevolence, as being also means—although, as they judge, inferior means—of attaining to the same realities which are hidden under the Muslim symbols: all true in a measure, but not the absolute truth to those who have

> attained a purer air
> Whose faith has centre everywhere,
> Nor cares to fix itself to form.

M. Garcin de Tassy goes so far as to say, "Ils pensent que la Bible et le Coran ont été seulement écrits pour l'homme que se contente de l'apparence des choses, que s'occupe de l'extérieur, pour le *zâhir parast* comme ils le nomment, et non pour le Sofi, que sonde le fond des choses."[1] I incline to think that this is too strongly put. But that is a large question and cannot be discussed here. Certain it is that the system of the Sûfîs is imbued, and that largely, with pantheism,[2] but pantheism of no vulgar or ignoble kind; not the pantheism so widely spread in this nineteenth-century Europe, which is

[1] *La Poésie Philosophique et Religieuse chez les Persans*, p. 12.

[2] The late Professor Palmer was of opinion that Sûfism "steers a middle course between the Pantheism of India on the one hand, and the Deism of the Corán on the other"; that it "is really the development of the Primæval Religion of the Aryan race."—*Oriental Mysticism*, Pref. pp. ix. x.

merely a bad dream of materialism after its surfeit among the swine; but rather that higher pantheism which is but oneside of an eternal truth, distorted and exaggerated by its incompleteness; that pantheism sung by a great poet and teacher, who—however imperfect we may account his teaching—has unquestionably done much to elevate and purify the lives of millions:

> Earth, these solid stars, this weight of body and limb,
> Are they not sign and symbol of thy division from Him!
> Dark is the world to thee; thyself art the reason why;
> For is He not all but thou, that has power to feel "I am I."

It is upon the practice of Divine love that the Sûfîs rest all morality. One of them being asked who was bad, replied, in words which recall the famous hymn of St. Francis Xavier, "Those who serve God out of fear of punishment or hope of reward." And then, the question being put to him "From what motive do you serve God?" he answered, "Out of love to Him." The practical expounders and preachers of Sûfism are the dervishes, the monks of Islâm, whose numbers and influence are great throughout the East, and especially in Turkey, where, according to Dozy, thirty-two distinct orders of them are found.[1] In Constantinople alone they have two hundred monasteries. They are also styled Faqîrs, Poor Men of God, and

[1] Mr. Brown, in his interesting work on the dervishes (p. 76), enumerates thirty-six, on the authority of Von Hammer; twelve dating from before the foundation of the Turkish Empire, the others of more modern origin.

constitute thoroughly organized bodies, minutely discriminated from each other. "Every school, every brotherhood, has its own distinctive teaching and technicalities, its peculiar practices and observances, its saints and doctors, great men and founders"—just like the Benedictines and Carthusians, the Franciscans and Dominicans, among ourselves. It would be impossible to enter here upon a detailed account of Mohammedan monasticism, nor can I even attempt to discuss the general character and influence of the religious of Islâm. Of course the proverb *cucullus non facit monachum* has its application to them; and there can be no question that there is in mysticism a tendency towards sensuality, and that of a gross kind—*corruptio optimi pessima.* Equally unquestionable is it that the dervishes have frequently incurred the suspicion of the ruling hierarchy of the Muslim Church.[1] Nor need this surprise us when we remember how Savonarola and St. John of the Cross fared at the hands of the appointed guardians of Catholic orthodoxy—how John Wesley and his companions were treated by the Anglican Episcopate. What seems to be certain is the strong consensus of opinion from those who know Mohammedan countries best, that, as Dr. Wolff expresses it, the Sûfîs, in many places, "are people who

[1] The term "hierarchy" is, perhaps, apt to mislead. The "Ulemâ of Islâm" are the doctors of the Mohammedan law, and are more like Jewish rabbis than a Christian *clerus.*

really try to come nearer to God" "by a moral life, separation from the world, meditation, prayer, and reading the books of other religious sects"; that "many of them are like Cornelius, whose prayers and alms went up for a memorial before God."[1] And Professor Cowell judges that we must look to Sûfism for "that preparation of the Mohammedan mind which in due time may lead to the overthrow of Islâm for a purer creed."[2] However that may be, it is certain that no one is really competent to judge of Islâm, as a living system, who has not studied the writings and legends of its saints. And here let me mention a most valuable contribution which has recently been made to our knowledge of one of the greatest of them, Jelâlu-'D-Dîn, commonly called by his spiritual children Mevlânâ, our Lord, the contemporary of St. Francis of Assisi, and hardly less famous in the Eastern world than the founder of the Friars Minor in the Western. In one of the volumes of Mr. Trübner's *Oriental Series* Mr. Redhouse, than whom no more competent scholar could have dealt with the subject, has given us a metrical version of a portion of the celebrated poem of this eminent person—the *Mesnevi*, usually known as the *Mesneviyi Sherif*, or

[1] Quoted by Professor Cowell, *Oxford Essays*, 1855, p. 175. Mr. Brown, in the preface to his work on the dervishes, bears testimony that he has found those of them with whom he is acquainted "liberal and intelligent, sincere, and most faithful friends."

[2] *Ibid.*

Holy Mesnevi, a work of which Professor Cowell judges that it is "in many respects one of the most remarkable productions of the Eastern mind"; that it is "unsurpassed in Persian literature for depth of thought or beauty of imagery"; that "the flow of fine things runs on unceasingly as from a river-god's urn." To his translation of the first book of the *Mesnevi*, Mr. Redhouse has prefixed a selection from the *Acts of Jelâl* and certain of his ancestors and descendants, as collected by the historian El-Eflâkî, a dervish of the order founded by Jelâl, which, by the way, is still the most considerable of the religious communities of Islâm. It was under obedience to his spiritual director, Chelebî Emir 'Arif, Jelâl's grandson, that Eflâkî undertook the compilation of his work, which was begun in the year 1310 of our era, and finished in 1353. It contains, as Mr. Redhouse tells us, "many hundreds of anecdotes," each "the account of a miracle wrought by the living or the dead, or the narrative of some strange or striking event" "related to Eflâkî by trustworthy reporters, whose names are generally given, and for a few of which he vouches himself as an eye-witness." I know of no work of so great value and importance to the student of comparative hagiology.

And now in concluding this brief, but, as I trust, not wholly inadequate survey of the great

non-Christian creeds, let me say something regarding the spirit, in which, as it seems to me, the investigation of them should be undertaken. It was a very just remark of the late Mr. Grote, "Religious beliefs are apt to appear absurd to those who do not share them": and assuredly if any one is in search of puerility, of inanity, of folly, he will find it in abundance in these ancient religions. But in this quest he will probably miss all that makes them most worthy of study. One of the most interesting and important of facts about the human race is the universality of religious ideas. As God left Himself not without testimony in the physical order to the nations whom He "suffered to walk in their own ways," "doing good from heaven, giving rain and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness," so assuredly has He not left Himself without testimony in the hearts and consciences of the incalculable millions, the works of His hands, beyond the pale of Judaism or Christianity. Of such as think other than this, may we not say, in Jeremy Taylor's phrase, "These persons do not believe noble things of God?" Surely we may say, and surely we ought to remember, that in all religions, however overlaid by superstition or marred by ignorance, or perverted by passion, there is a divine element. That this is so has been stated with great force and beauty by one whose words are always forcible and beautiful. I venture, therefore, to

quote the following passage, slightly abbreviating it, from Cardinal Newman's *History of the Arians*. The Cardinal is speaking of that doctrine of the Alexandrian School which he calls *the divinity of Traditionary Religion*:—

We know well enough for practical purposes what is meant by Revealed Religion, viz., that it is the doctrine taught in the Mosaic and Christian Dispensations, and contained in the Holy Scriptures, and is from God in a sense in which no other doctrine can be said to be from him. Yet, if we would speak correctly, we must confess, on the authority of the Bible itself, that all knowledge of religion is from Him, and not only that which the Bible has transmitted to us. There never was a time when God had not spoken to man, and told him to a certain extent his duty. . . . We are expressly told in the New Testament, that at no time He left Himself without witness in the world, and that in every nation He accepts those who fear and obey Him. It would seem, then, that there is something true and divinely revealed, in every religion, all over the earth, overloaded, as it may be, and at times even stifled, by the impieties which the corrupt will and understanding of man have incorporated with it: so that Revelation, properly speaking, is an universal, not a local gift. . . . . The word and the Sacraments are the characteristics of the elect people of God; but all men have had more or less the guidance of Tradition, in addition to those internal notions of right and wrong which the Spirit has put into the heart of each individual. This vague and uncertain family of religious truths, originally from God, but sojourning without the sanction of miracle, or a definite home, as pilgrims up and down the world, and discernible and separable from the corrupt legends with which they are mixed, by the spiritual mind alone, may be called the *Dispensation of Paganism*, after the example of [Clement of Alexandria].[1] And further, Scripture gives us reason to believe

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[1] Clement says: "Τὴν φιλοσοφίαν Ἕλλησιν οἷον διαθήκην οἰκείαν δεδόσθαι, ὑποβάθραν οὖσαν τῆς κατὰ Χριστὸν φιλοσοφίας." —*Strom.* vi. p. 648.

that the traditions, thus originally delivered to mankind at large, have been secretly reanimated and enforced by new communications from the unseen world; though these were not of such a nature as to be produced as evidence, or used as criteria and tests, and roused the attention rather than informed the understandings of the heathen. The book of Genesis contains a record of the Dispensation of Natural Religion, or Paganism, as well as of the patriarchal. . . . Job was a pagan in the same sense in which the Eastern nations are pagans in the present day. He lived among idolaters, yet he and his friends had cleared themselves from the superstitions with which the true creed was beset; and, while one of them was divinely instructed by dreams, he himself at length heard the voice of God out of the whirlwind, in recompense for his long trial and his faithfulness under it. . . . There is nothing unreasonable in the notion, that there may have been heathen poets and sages, or sybils again, in a certain extent divinely illuminated, and organs through whom religious and moral truth was conveyed to their countrymen; though their knowledge of the Power from whom the gift came, nay, and their perception of the gift as existing in themselves, may have been very faint or defective. This doctrine, thus imperfectly sketched, shall now be presented to the reader in the words of St. Clement. "To the Word of God," he says, "all the host of angels and heavenly powers is subject, revealing, as He does, His holy office (*economy*), for Him who has put all things under Him. Wherefore, His are all men; some actually knowing Him, others not as yet: some as friends" (Christians), "others as faithful servants" (Jews), "others as simply servants" (heathen). He is the Teacher, who instructs the enlightened Christian by mysteries, and the faithful labourer by cheerful hopes, and the hard of heart with his keen corrective discipline; so that His providence is particular, public, and universal. . . . He it is who gives to the Greeks their philosophy by His ministering Angels . . . . for He is the Saviour, not of these or those, but of all. . . . . His precepts, both the former and the latter, are drawn forth from one fount."[1]

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[1] *The Arians of the Fourth Century*, 3rd ed. (1871), pp. 81-85.

If this be so—as who can doubt?—surely the spirit in which we should approach these non-Christian religions is clear enough. Reverently and gladly should we recognise in them such veritics, theological and ethical, as they present, remembering with St. Augustine, "Nec quisquam præter Te, alius est doctor veri ubicumque et undecumque claruerit."[1] Hidden in every one of them we should delight to trace "something that could lift up the human heart from this earth to a higher world, something that could make man feel the omnipresence of a higher Power, something that could make him shrink from evil, and incline to good; something to sustain him in his short journey through life, with its bright moments of happiness and its long hours of terrible distress."[2] The most degraded fetish-worshipper seems to me wise and venerable beside the atheist, equipped with all the culture of this enlightened age. The votary of Mumbo Jumbo, at least, has retained that power of looking up to something higher than sight and reason supply, which is lacking to the materialist of nineteenth-century Europe, into whose soul, as he gropes amid the beggarly elements of corruption, death has entered, according to the too true judgment passed upon a celebrated physicist: "à force de se promener dans l'atmosphère des sépulchres son âme a gagné la mort." Such an one may well dis-

[1] *Confes.* l. v. c. 6.

[2] Preface to the *Sacred Books*, p. xxxviii.

miss these ancient faiths as mere superstitions. Not so the man who really believes in God. That makes all the difference in our view of this world. It has been well said that human history is not only the record of the deeds of man, that it is the record of the dealings of God with man. This is pre-eminently true of the history of religions.

But again. Besides its high comparative value, the study of these non-Christian religions has an important practical use, which must not be lost sight of. Here let me once more quote the weighty words of Cardinal Newman :—

> If [the doctrine of the divinity of Traditionary Religion] be scriptural, it is not difficult to determine the line of conduct which is to be observed by the Christian apologist and missionary. Believing God's hand to be in every system, so far forth as it is true (though Scripture alone is the depositary of His unadulterated and complete revelation), he will, after St. Paul's manner, seek some points in the existing superstitions as the basis of his own instructions instead of indiscriminately condemning and discarding the whole assemblage of heathen opinions and practices; and he will address his hearers, not as men in a state of actual perdition, but as being in imminent danger of the "wrath to come," because they are in bondage and ignorance, and probably under God's displeasure, that is, the vast majority of them are so in fact, but not necessarily so, from the very circumstance of their being heathen. And while he strenuously opposes all that is idolatrous, immoral, and profane, in their creed, he will profess to be leading them on to perfection, and to be recovering and purifying, rather than reversing, the essential principles of their belief.[1]

[1] *The Arians of the Fourth Century*, p. 86. Compare the striking passage in St. Augustine (*de Doct. Christ.* l. ii. c. 40) in which he says that such moral and theological truths as Pagan systems contain should be applied "ad usum justum prædicandi evangelii."

Precisely. And, this being so, surely it may be said that an intelligent comprehension of the religions from which they seek to win men to the more excellent way revealed by the faith of Christ is almost a necessary preparation for those devoted persons who essay the work of converting the heathen. Mr. Matthew Arnold with gentle banter observes, "For any one who weighs the matter well, the missionary in clerical coat and gaiters whom one sees in woodcuts preaching to a group of picturesque Orientals, is, from the inadequacy of his criticism, both of his hearers' religion and of his own, a hardly less grotesque object in his intellectual equipment for his task than in his outward attire."[1] Missionaries may be excused if they decline to learn their theology of Mr. Matthew Arnold. Still it always is, or ought to be, of advantage to see ourselves as others see us: nor perhaps is the advantage derivable least, when the view is unflattering.

[1] *Literature and Dogma*, p. 24.

CHAPTER IV.

NATURALISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

I SUPPOSE there are few students of man and of society to whom the present religious condition and apparent religious prospect of the world can seem very satisfactory. If there is any lesson clear from history it is this: that in every age religion has been the mainstay both of private life and of the public order,—"the substance of humanity," as Quinet well expresses it, "whence issue, as by so many necessary consequences, political institutions, the arts, poetry, philosophy, and, up to a certain point, even the sequences of events."[1] The existing civilization of Europe and America—I use the word civilization in its highest and widest sense, and mean by it especially the laws, traditions, beliefs, and habits of thought and action, whereby individual family and social life is governed—is mainly the work of Christianity. The races which inhabit the vast Asiatic continent are what they are chiefly from the influence of those great non-Christian systems which we have surveyed in the last chapter.

[1] *Le Génie des Religions*, l. i. c. i.

In the fetishism of the rude tribes of Africa, still in the state of the childhood of humanity, we have what has been called the *parler enfantin* of religion:—it is that rude and unformed speech, as of spiritual babes and sucklings, which principally makes them to differ from the anthropoid apes of their tropical forests: "un peuple est compté pour quelque chose le jour où il s'elève a la pensée de Dieu."[1] But the spirit of the age is unquestionably hostile to all these creeds from the highest to the lowest. In Europe there is a movement—of its breadth and strength I shall say more presently—the irreconcilable hostility of which to "all religion and all religiosity," to use the words of the late M. Louis Blanc, is written on its front. Thought is the most contagious thing in the world, and in these days of steam locomotion and electric telegraphs, of cheap literature and ubiquitous journalism, ideas travel with the speed of light, and the influences which are warring against the theologies of Europe are certainly acting as powerful solvents upon the religious systems of the rest of the world. But, apart from the loud and fierce negation of the creed of Christendom which is so striking a feature of the present day, there is among those who nominally adhere to it a vast amount of unaggressive doubt. Between the party which avowedly aims at the destruction of "all religion and all religiosity,"

[1] *Le Génie des Religions*, l. i. c. iv.

at the delivery of man from what it calls the "nightmare," or "the intellectual whoredom" of spiritualism, and those who cling with undimmed faith to the religion of their fathers, there is an exceeding great multitude who are properly described as sceptics. It is even more an age of doubt than of denial. As Chateaubriand noted, when the century was yet young, "We are no longer living in times when it avails to say 'Believe and do not examine'; people will examine whether we like it or not." And since these words were written people have been busily examining in every department of human thought, and especially in the domain of religion. In particular Christianity has been made the subject of the most searching scrutiny. How indeed could we expect that it should escape? The greatest fact in the annals of the modern world, it naturally invites the researches of the historian. The basis of the system of ethics still current amongst us, it peremptorily claims the attention of the sociologist. The fount of the metaphysical conceptions accepted in Europe, until in the last century, before the "uncreating word" of Lockian sensism,

> Philosophy, that leaned on Heaven before,
> Sinks to her second cause, and is no more,

it challenges the investigation of the psychologist. The practical result of these inquiries must be

allowed to be, to a large extent, negative. In many quarters, where thirty or forty years ago we should certainly have found acquiescence, honest if dull, in the received religious systems of Europe, we now discern incredulity, more or less far-reaching, about "revealed religion" altogether, and, at the best, "faint possible Theism," in the place of old-fashioned orthodoxy. And earnest men, content to bear as best they may their own burden of doubt and disappointment, do not dissemble to themselves that the immediate outlook is dark and discouraging. Like the French monarch, they discern the omens of the deluge to come after them; a vast shipwreck of all faith, and all virtue, or conscience, of God; brute force, embodied in an omnipotent State, the one ark likely to escape submersion in the pitiless waters. A world from which the high sanctions of religion, hitherto the binding principle of society, are relegated to the domain of old wives' fables; a march through life with its brief dream of pleasure, and long reality of pain unchanged, but with no firm ground of faith, no "hope both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil," no worthy object of desire whereby man may erect himself above himself, whence he may derive an indefectible rule of conduct, a constraining incentive to self-sacrifice, an adequate motive for patient endurance,—such is the vision of the coming time, as

it presents itself to many of the most thoughtful and competent observers.

In these circumstances it is natural that so thoughtful and competent an observer as the author of *Ecce Homo* should take up his parable. Wide knowledge of the modern mind, broad sympathies, keen and delicate perceptions, freedom from party and personal ends, and a power of graceful and winning statement must, upon all hands, be conceded to him. What such a man thinks on the religious outlook of the world is certain to be interesting; and, whether we agree with it or not, is as certain to be suggestive. I propose, therefore, first of all to consider what may be learnt about the topic with which I am concerned, from this writer's work on *Natural Religion*, and I shall then proceed to deal with it in my own way.

The author of *Natural Religion* starts with the broad assumption that "supernaturalism" is discredited by modern "science." I may perhaps, in passing, venture to express my regret that in an inquiry demanding, from its nature and importance, the utmost precision of which human speech is capable, the author has in so few cases clearly and rigidly limited the sense of the terms which he

employs. "Supernaturalism," for example, is a word which may bear many different meanings: which, as a matter of fact, does bear, I think, for me a very different meaning from that which it bears for the author of *Natural Religion*. So, again, "science" in his book is tacitly assumed to denote physical science only: and what an assumption, as though there were no other sciences than the physical! This in passing. I shall have to touch again upon these points. For the present let us regard the scope and aim of this discourse of Natural Religion, as the author states it. He finds that the supernatural portion of Christianity, as of all religions, is widely considered to be discredited by physical science. "Two opposite theories of the Universe" (p. 26) are before men. The one propounded by Christianity "is summed up," as he deems, "in the three propositions, that a Personal Will is the cause of the Universe, that that Will is perfectly benevolent, that that Will has sometimes interfered by miracles with the order of the Universe" (p. 13). The other he states as follows: —"Science opposes to God, Nature. When it denies God it denies the existence of any power beyond or superior to Nature; and it may deny at the same time anything like a *cause* of Nature. It believes in certain laws of co-existence and sequence in phenomena, and in denying God it means to deny that anything further can be known" (p. 17.) "For

what is God—so the argument runs—but a hypothesis, which religious men have mistaken for a demonstrated reality? And is it not precisely against such premature hypotheses that science most strenuously protests? That a Personal Will is the cause of the Universe—this might stand very well as a hypothesis to work with, until facts should either confirm it or force it to give way to another, either different or at least modified. That this Personal Will is benevolent, and is shown to be so by the facts of the Universe, which evince a providential care for man and other animals—this is just one of those plausibilities which passed muster before scientific method was understood, but modern science rejects it as unproved. Modern science holds that there may be design in the Universe, but that to penetrate the design is, and probably always will be, beyond the power of the human understanding. That this Personal Will has on particular occasions revealed itself by breaking through the customary order of the Universe, and performing what are called miracles—this, it is said, is one of those legends of which histories were full until a stricter view of evidence was introduced, and the modern critical spirit sifted thoroughly the annals of the world" (p. 11). These, in our author's words, are the two opposite theories of the Universe before the world: two "mortally hostile" (p. 13) theories; the one "the greatest of all

affirmations"; "the other the most fatal of all negations" (p. 26), and the latter, as he discerns, is everywhere making startling progress. "The extension of the *methods* of physical science to the whole domain of human knowledge" he notes as the most important "change of system in the intellectual world" (p. 7). "No one," he continues, "needs to be told what havoc this physical method is making with received systems, and it produces a sceptical disposition of mind towards primary principles which have been thought to lie deeper than *all* systems. Those current abstractions, which make up all the morality and all the philosophy of most people, have been brought under suspicion. Mind and matter, duties and rights, morality and expediency, honour and interest, virtue and vice—all these words, which seemed once to express elementary and certain realities, now strike us as just the words which, thrown into the scientific crucible, might dissolve at once. It is thus not merely philosophy which is discredited, but just that homely and popular wisdom by which common life is guided. This too, it appears, instead of being the sterling product of plain experience, is the overflow of an immature philosophy, the redundance of the uncontrolled speculations of thinkers who were unacquainted with scientific method" (p. 8). And then, moreover, there is that great political movement which has

so largely and directly affected the course of events and the organization of society on the continent of Europe, and which in less measure, and with more occult operation, has notably modified our own ways of thinking and acting in this country. Now the Revolution, in its ultimate or Jacobin phase, is the very manifestation, in the public order, of the tendency which in the intellectual calls itself "scientific." It bitterly and contemptuously rejects the belief in the supernatural hitherto accepted in Europe. It wages implacable war upon the ancient religion of the world. "It delights in declaring itself atheistic"[1] (p. 37). It has "a quarrel with theology as a doctrine. 'Theology,' it says, even if not exactly opposed to social improvement, is a superstition, and as such allied to ignorance and conservatism. Granting that its precepts are good, it enforces them by legends and fictitious stories which can only influence the uneducated, and

[1] The author of *Natural Religion* thinks it mistaken in so declaring itself. "Its invectives against God and against Religion do not prove that it is atheistic, but only that it thinks itself so. And why does it think itself so? Because God and Religion are identified in its view with the Catholic Church; and the Catholic Church is a thing so very redoubtable that we need scarcely inquire why it is passionately hated and feared" (p. 37). But this is an error. God and Religion are not identified, in the view of the Revolution, with the Catholic Church. No one who reads its accredited organs can doubt that it is as implacably hostile to religious Protestanism as to Catholicism.

therefore in order to preserve its influence it must needs oppose education. Nor are these stories a mere excrescence of theology, but theology itself. For theology is neither more nor less than a doctrine of the supernatural. It proclaims a power behind nature which occasionally interferes with natural laws. It proclaims another world quite different from this in which we live, a world into which what is called the soul is believed to pass at death. It believes, in short, in a number of things which students of nature know nothing about, and which science puts aside either with respect or with contempt. These supernatural doctrines are not merely a part of theology, still less separable from theology, but theology consists exclusively of them. Take away the supernatural Person, miracles, and the spiritual world, you take away theology at the same time, and nothing is left but simple Nature and simple Science" (p. 39). Such, as the author of *Ecce Homo* considers, is "the question between religion and science" now before the world. And his object[1] in *Natural Religion* is not to show that the "negative conclusions so often drawn from modern scientific discoveries are not warranted," still less to refute them, but to estimate "the precise amount of destruction caused by them," admitting, for the sake of argument, that they are true. His own judgment upon their truth he

[1] See his Preface to the Second Edition.

expressly reserves, with the cautious remarks, that "it is not the greatest scientific authorities who are so confident in negation, but rather the inferior men who echo their opinions:"[1] that "it is not on the morrow of great discoveries that we can best judge of their negative effect upon ancient beliefs:" and that he is "disposed to agree with those who think that in the end the new views of the Universe will not gratify an extreme party quite so much as is now supposed."[2]

The argument, then, put forward in *Natural Religion*, and put forward, as I understand the author, tentatively, and for what it is worth, and by no means as expressing his own assured convictions, is this:—that to banish the supernatural from the human mind is "not to destroy theology or religion or even Christianity, but in some respects to revive and purify all three":[3] that supernaturalism is not of the essence but of the accidents of religion; that "the *unmiraculous* part of the Christian tradition has a value which was long

[1] Warburton, a shrewd observer enough, expressed the same view a hundred years ago, with characteristic truculence:—"Mathematicians—I do not mean the inventors and geniuses amongst them, whom I honour, but the Demonstrators of others' inventions, who are ten times duller and prouder than a damned poet—have a strange aversion to everything that smacks of religion."—*Letters to Hurd*, xix.

[2] Preface to the Second Edition, p. vii. [3] *Ibid.* p. v.

hidden from view by the blaze of supernaturalism," and "that so much will this unmiraculous part gain by being brought, for the first time, into full light . . . . that faith may be disposed to think even that she is well rid of miracle, and that she would be indifferent to it even if she could still believe it" (p. 254). That religion in some form or another is essential to the world, the author apparently no more doubts than I do: indeed he expressly warns us that "at this moment we are threatened with a general dissolution of states from the decay of religion" (p. 211). "If religion fails us," these are his concluding words, "it is only when human life itself is proved to be worthless. It may be doubtful whether life is worth living, but if religion be what it has been described in this book, the principle by which alone life is redeemed from secularity and animalism, ... can it be doubtful that if we are to live at all we must live, and civilization can only live, by religion?" And now let us proceed to see what is the hope set before us in this book, and consider whether the Natural Religion which it unfolds is such a religion as the world can live by, as civilization can live by.

The author of *Natural Religion*, it will be remembered, assumes for the purpose of his argument that the supernatural portion of Christianity is discredited, is put aside, by physical science; that, as M. Renan has somewhere tersely expressed it, "there is no such thing as the supernatural, but from the beginning of being everything in the world of phenomena has proceeded by regular laws." Let us consider what this involves. It involves the elimination from our creed, not only of the miraculous incidents in the history of the Founder of Christianity, including, of course, His Resurrection —the fundamental fact upon which, from St. Paul's time to our own, His religion has been supposed to rest—but all the beliefs, aspirations, hopes, attaching to that religion as a system of grace. It destroys theology, because it destroys that idea of God from which theology starts, and which it professes to unfold. This being so, it might appear that religion is necessarily extinguished too. Certainly, in the ordinary sense which the word bears among us, it is. "Religio," writes St. Thomas Aquinas, "est virtus reddens debitum honorem Deo":[1] and again: "Religio est quædam protestatio fidei, spei, et charitatis, quibus homo primordialiter ordinatur in Deum:"[2] words which

[1] *Summa*, 1ma 2dæ qu. 60, art. 3.

[2] *Summa*, 2nd 2dæ qu. 101, art. 3.

are but the expanded equivalent of Kant's account of it: "the representation to ourselves of the moral law as the Will of God." But that, of course, is very far from being what the author of *Ecce Homo* means by religion, and by natural religion, in the work before us. Its key-note is struck in the words of Wordsworth cited on its title-page: "We live by admiration."[1] Religion he understands to be "some ardent condition of the feelings," "habitual and regulated admiration" (p. 129), "worship of whatever in the known Universe appears worthy of worship" (p. 161). "To have an individuality," he teaches, "is to have an ideal, and to have an ideal is to have an object of worship; it is to have an religion" (p. 136). "Irreligion," on the other hand, is defined as "life without worship," and is said to consist in "the absence of habitual admiration, and in a state of the feelings, not ardent but cold and torpid" (p. 129). It would appear then that religion, in its new sense, is enthusiasm of well-nigh any kind, but particularly the enthusiasm of morality, which is the "religion of right," the

[1] What Wordsworth says is—

"We live by Admiration, Hope, and Love,
And, even as these are well and wisely fixed,
In dignity of being we ascend."

This is widely different from the nude proposition that "we live by admiration."

enthusiasm of art, which is "the religion of beauty," and the enthusiasm of physical science, which is "the religion of law and of truth" (p. 125).[1] "Art and science," we read, "are not secular, and it is a fundamental error to call them so; they have the nature of religion" (p. 127). "The popular Christianity of the day, in short, is for the artist too melancholy and sedate, and for the man of science too sentimental and superficial; in short, it is too melancholy for the one and not melancholy enough for the other. They become, therefore, dissenters from the existing religion; sympathizing too little with the popular worship, they worship by themselves and dispense with outward forms. But they protest at the same time that, in strictness, they separate from the religious bodies around them only because they know of a purer or a happier religion" (p. 125). It is useful to turn, from time to time, from the abstract to the concrete, in order to steady and purge our mental vision. Let us therefore, in passing, gaze upon Théophile Gautier, the high priest of the pride of human form, whose unspeakably impure romance has been pronounced by Mr. Swinburne to be "the holy writ of beauty"; and, on the other, upon Schopenhauer, the most thorough-going and consistent of physicists, who reduces all philosophy to

[1] See also p. 127.

a cosmology, and consider whether, the author of *Ecce Homo* himself being judge, the religion of the one can be maintained to be purer, or that of the other to be happier, than the most degraded form of popular Christianity. I proceed to his declaration, which naturally follows from what has been said, that the essence of religion is not in theological dogma nor in ethical practice. The really religious man, as we are henceforth to conceive of him, is, apparently, the man of sentiment. "The substance of religion is culture," which is "a threefold devotion to Goodness, Beauty, and Truth," and "the fruit of it the higher life" (p. 145). And the higher life is "the influence which draws men's thoughts away from their personal existence, making them intensely aware of other existences, to which it binds them by strong ties, sometimes of admiration, sometimes of awe, sometimes of duty, sometimes of love" (p. 236). And as in the individual religion is identified with culture, so, "in its public aspect," "it is identical with civilization" (p. 201), which "expresses the same threefold religion, shown on a larger scale, in the character, institutions, and ways of life of nations" (p. 202). "The great civilized community" is "the modern city of God" (p. 204).

But what God? Clearly not the God spoken of by St. Paul—or the author of the Epistle to the

Hebrews, whoever he was—"the God of Peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant;" for that God, the Creator, Witness, and Judge of men—is assuredly *Deus absconditus*, a hidden God, belonging to "the supernatural"; and the hypothesis upon which the author of *Ecce Homo* proceeds in *Natural Religion* is that men have "ceased to believe in anything beyond Nature" (p. 76). The best thing for them to do, therefore, he suggests, if they must have a God, is to deify Nature. But "Nature considered as the residuum that is left after the elimination of everything supernatural, comprehends man with all his thoughts and aspirations, not less than the forms of the material world" (p. 78). God, therefore, in the new Natural Religion, is to be conceived of as Physical "Nature, including Humanity" (p. 69), or "the unity which all things compose in virtue of the universal presence of the same laws" (p. 87), which would seem to be no more than a Materialistic expression, its exact value being all that exists, the totality of forces, of beings, and of forms. The author of *Natural Religion* does not seem to be sanguine that this new Deity will win the hearts of men. He anticipates, indeed, the objection "that when you substitute Nature for God you take a thing heartless and pitiless, instead of love and goodness."

To this he replies, "If we abandoned our belief in the supernatural, it would not be only inanimate Nature that would be left to us; we should not give ourselves over, as is often rhetorically described, to the mercy of merciless powers—winds and waves, earthquakes, volcanoes, and fire. The God we should believe in would not be a passionless, utterly inhuman power." "Nature, in the sense in which we are now using the word, includes humanity, and therefore, so far from being pitiless, includes all the pity that belongs to the whole human race, and all the pity that they have accumulated, and, as it were, capitalized in institutions, political, social, and ecclesiastical, through countless generations" (pp. 68-9).

He, then, who would not "shock modern views of the Universe" (p. 157) must thus think of the Deity. And so atheism acquires a new meaning. "It is," we read, "a disbelief in the *existence* of God—that is, a disbelief in *any* regularity in the Universe to which a man must conform himself under penalties" (p. 27); a definition which surely is a little hard upon the *libres-penseurs*, as taking the bread out of their mouths. I remember hearing not long ago, in Paris, of a young Radical diplomatist who, with the good taste which characterizes the school now dominant in French politics, took occasion to mention to a well known ecclesiastical statesman that he was an atheist. "O de l'athéisme

à vôtre âge," said the nuncio, with a benign smile: "pourquoi, quand l'impiété suffit et ne vous engage à rien?" But with the new signification imposed upon the word, a profession of atheism would bind one in quite another sense: it would be equivalent to a profession of insanity; for where, except among the wearers of strait-waistcoats or the occupants of padded rooms, shall we find a man who does not believe in some regularity in the universe to which he must conform himself under penalties? But let us follow the author of *Natural Religion* a step further in his inquiry. "In what relation does this religion stand to our Christianity, to our Churches, and religious denominations?" (p. 139). Certainly, we may safely agree with him that "it has a difficulty in identifying itself with any of the organized systems," and as safely that the "conception of a spiritual city," of an "organ of civilization," of an "interpreter of human society," is "precisely what is now needed" (p. 223). "The tide of thought, scepticism, and discovery, which has set in . . . . must be warded off the institutions which it attacks as recklessly as if its own existence did not depend upon them. It introduces everywhere a sceptical condition of mind, which it recommends as the only way to real knowledge; and yet if such scepticism became practical, if large communities came to regard every question in politics and law as absolutely open, their institu-

tions would dissolve, and science, among other things, would be buried in the ruin. Modern thought brings into vogue a speculative Nihilism . . . . but unintentionally it creates at the same time a practical Nihilism . . . . There is a mine under modern society which, if we consider it, has been the necessary result of the abeyance in recent times of the idea of the Church" (p. 208). In fact, as our author discerns, the existence of civilization is at stake. "It can live only by religion" (p. 262). "On religion depends the whole fabric of civilization, all the future of mankind" (p. 218). The remedy which he suggests is that the Natural Religion which we have been considering, the new "universal religion," should "be concentrated into a doctrine," should "embody itself in a Church" (p. 207). "This Church," we are told, "exists already, a vast communion of all who are inspired by the culture and civilization of the age. But it is unconscious, and perhaps, if it could attain to consciousness, it might organize itself more deliberately and effectively" (p. 212). The precise mode of such organization is not indicated, but its main function it appears would be to diffuse an "adequate doctrine of civilization," and especially to teach "science," in "itself a main part of religion, as the grand revelation of God in these later times," and also the theory "of the gradual development of human society, which alone can

explain to us the past state of affairs, give us the clue to history, save us from political aberrations, and point out the direction of progress" (p. 209). Of the *clerus* of the new Natural Church we read as follows:—

If we really believe that a case can be made out for civilization, this case must be presented by popular teachers, and their most indispensable qualification will be independence. They perhaps will be able to show that happiness or even universal comfort is not, and never has been, within quite so easy reach, that it cannot be taken by storm, and that as for the institutions left us from the past they are no more diabolical than they are divine, being the fruit of necessary development far more than of free-will or calculation. Such teachers would be the free clergy of modern civilization. It would be their business to investigate and to teach the true relation of man to the universe and to society, the true Ideal he should worship, the true vocation of particular nations, the course which the history of mankind has taken hitherto, in order that upon a full view of what is possible and desirable men may live and organize themselves for the future. In short, the modern Church is to do what Hebrew prophecy did in its fashion for the Jews, and what Bishops and Popes did according to their lights for the Roman world when it laboured in the tempest, and for barbaric tribes first submitting themselves to be taught. Another grand object of the modern Church would be to teach and organize the outlying world, which for the first time in history now lies prostrate at the feet of Christian civilization. Here are the ends to be gained. These once recognized, the means are to be determined by their fitness alone (p. 221).

So much must suffice to indicate the essential features of the religion which would be left us after the elimination of the supernatural. And now we are to consider whether this religion will suffice for

the wants of the world; whether it is a religion "which shall appeal to the sense of duty as forcibly, preach righteousness and truth, justice and mercy, as solemnly and as exclusively as Christianity itself does" (p. 157). Surely to state the question is enough. In fact the author of *Natural Religion* quite recognizes that "to many, if not most, of those who feel the need of religion, all that has been offered in this book will perhaps at first seem offered in derision" (p. 260), and frankly owns that "whether it deserves to be called a faith at all, whether it justifies men in living, and in calling others into life, may be doubted" (p. 66). He tells us that "the thought of a God revealed in Nature," which he has suggested, does not seem to him "by any means satisfactory, or worthy to replace the Christian view, or even as a commencement, from which we must rise by logical necessity to the Christian view" (p. 25), and it must be hard not to agree with him. It is difficult to suppose that any one who considers the facts of life, who contemplates not the *individua vaga* of theories, but the men and women of this working-day world, can think otherwise. Surely no one who really surveys mankind as they are, as they have been in the past, and, so far as we are able to judge, will be in the future, can suppose that this Natural Religion, even if embodied in a Natural Church, and equipped with a "free

clergy," will meet their wants, or win their affections, or satisfy those "strange yearnings" of which we read in Plato, and which, in one form or another, stir every human soul; which we may trace in the chatterings of the poor Neapolitan crone to her Crucifix, or in the hallelujahs of "Happy Sal" at a Salvationist "Holiness Meeting," as surely as in the profoundest speculations of the Angelic Doctor, or in the loftiest periods of Bossuet. Can any one, in this age of all others, when, as the revelations of the physical world bring home to us so overwhelmingly what Pascal calls "the abyss of the boundless immensity of which I know nothing, and you know nothing," man sinks to an insignificance which, in the apt word of the author of *Natural Religion* "petrifies" him,—can any one believe that the compound of Pantheistic Positivism and Christian sentiment—if we may so account of it—set forth in these brilliant pages, will avail to redeem men from animalism and secularity? But, indeed, we need not here rest in the domain of mere speculation. The experiment has been tried. Not quite a century ago, when Chaumette's "Goddess of Reason," and Robespierre's "Supreme Being," had disappeared from the altars of France, La Reveillère-Lepeaux essayed to introduce a Natural Religion under the name of Theophilanthropy[1] to satisfy

[1] A good deal of information about Theophilanthropy and the Theophilanthropists, in an undigested and, indeed, chaotic state, will be found in Grégoire's *Histoire des Sectes Religieuses*, vol. i.

the spiritual needs of the country over which he ruled as a member of the Directory, Chemin Dupontés, Dupont de Nemours, and Bernardin de St. Pierre constituting with himself the four Evangelists of the new cult. The first mentioned of these must, indeed, be regarded as its inventor, and his *Manuel des Théophilanthrophiles* supplies the fullest exposition of it. But it was La Reveillère-Lepeaux whose influence gave form and actuality to the speculations of Chemin, and whose credit obtained for the new sect the use of some dozen of the principal churches of Paris, and of the choir and organ of Notre Dame. The formal *début* of the new religion may, perhaps, be dated from the 1st of May, 1797, when La Reveillère read to the Institute a memoir in which he justified its introduction upon grounds very similar to those urged in our own day against "the theological view of the universe." Moreover, he insisted that Catholicism was opposed to sound morality, that its worship was anti-social, and that its clergy—whom he contemptuously denominated *la prêtraille*, and whom he did his best to exterminate—were the enemies of the human race. In its leading features the new Church resembled very closely the system which we have just been considering, offered to the world by the author of *Ecce Homo*. It identified the Deity with Nature:[1] religion, considered subjectively,

[1] The Theophilanthropists were most anxious that the object of

with sentiment, and objectively, with civilization; and it regarded atheists and the adherents of all forms of faith—with the sole exception of Catholics—as eligible for its communion. Its dogmas, if one may so speak, were a hotchpotch of fine phrases about beauty, truth, right, and the like, culled from writers of all creeds and of no creed. Its chief public function consisted in the singing of a hymn to "the Father of the Universe," to a tune composed by one Gossec, a musician much in vogue at that time, and in lections chosen from Confucius, Vyasa, Zoroaster, Theognis, Cleanthes, Aristotle, Plato, La Bruyère, Fénélon, Voltaire, Rousseau, Young, and Franklin, the Sacred Scriptures of Christianity being carefully excluded on account, as may be supposed, of their alleged opposition to "sound morality." The priests of the *Natural Religion* were vested in sky-blue tunics, extending from the neck to the feet, and fastened at the waist by a red girdle, over which was a white robe open before. Such was the costume in which La Reveillère-Lepeaux exhibited himself to his astonished countrymen, and having the misfortune to be—as we are told—"petit, bossu, et puant," the exhibition obtained no great success. It must be owned,

their worship should not be supposed to be the Christian God. Thus in one of their hymns their Deity is invoked as follows:—

"Non, tu n'es pas le *Dieu* dont le prêtre est l'apôtre,
Tu n'as point par la Bible enseigné les humains."

however, that this Natural Church did its best to fill the void caused by the disappearance of the Christian religion. It even went so far as to provide substitutes for the Sacraments of Catholicism. At the rite which took the place of baptism, the father himself officiated, and, in lieu of the questions prescribed in the Roman Ritual, asked the godfather, "Do you promise before God and men to teach N. or M. from the dawn of his reason to adore God, to cherish (*chérir*) his fellows, and to make himself useful to his country?" And the godfather, holding the child towards heaven, replied, "I promise." Then followed the inevitable "discourse," and a hymn of which the concluding lines were:

> "Puisse un jour cet enfant honorer sa patrie,
> Et s'applaudir d'avoir vécu."

So much must suffice as to the Natural Church during the time that it existed among men as a fact, or, in the words of the author of *Ecce Homo*, as "an attempt to treat the subject of religion in a practical manner." But, backed as it was by the influence of a despotic government, and *felix opportunitate* as it must be deemed to have been in the period of its establishment, very few were added to it. Whereupon, as the author of *Ecce Homo* relates, not without a touch of gentle irony, La Reveillère confided to Talleyrand[1] his dis-

[1] The author of *Natural Religion* says, Talleyrand; I do not

appointment at his ill-success. "'His propaganda made no way,' he said, 'What was he to do?' he asked. The ex-bishop politely condoled with him, feared indeed it was a difficult task to found a new religion—more difficult than could be imagined, so difficult that he hardly knew what to advise! 'Still' —he went on, after a moment's reflection—'there is one plan which you might at least try: I should recommend you to be crucified, and to rise again the third day'" (p. 181). Is the author of *Ecce Homo* laughing in his sleeve at us? Surely his keen perception must have suggested to him, as he wrote this passage "mutato nomine, de me." It may be confidently predicted that, unless he is prepared to carry out Talleyrand's suggestion, the Natural Religion which he exhibits "to meet the wants of a sceptical age" will prove even a more melancholy failure than it proved when originally introduced a century ago by La Reveillère-Lepeaux.

Are we then thrown back on Pessimism—"the besetting difficulty of Natural Religion" (p. 101),

know on what authority. Grégoire writes:—"Au Directoire même on le raillait sur son zèle théophilantropique. Un de ses collègues, dit-on, lui proposait de se faire pendre et de ressusciter le troisième jour, comme l'infaillible moyen de faire triompher sa secte, et Carnot lui décoche dans son *Mémoire* des épigrammes sanglantes à ce sujet."—*Histoire des Sectes Religieuses*, vol. i. p. 406. Talleyrand was never a member of the Directory.

as the author of *Ecce Homo* confesses? Shall we put aside the Gospel, through which Jesus Christ has cast light upon life and immortality, for the Buddha's doctrine of the supreme evil of separate existence? Or if that is discredited by modern thought, as holding of the supernatural, shall we say that, after all, Schopenhauer's atheistic Nihilism is the key to the enigma of life? And is the prospect before the world that "universal darkness" which is to supervene, when, in the noble verse of the great moral poet of the last century—the noblest he ever wrote—

> Religion, blushing, veils her sacred fires,
> And unawares morality expires;
> Nor public flame, nor private, dares to shine,
> Nor human spark is left, nor glimpse divine.

I venture to think otherwise. And even at the risk of wearying by a twice-told tale, for I shall have to go over well-worn ground, I shall proceed to state the reasons why I think so, in the way in which they present themselves to my own mind. I shall be genuine, if not original, although indeed I might here shelter myself under a dictum —profoundly true it is—of Mr. Ruskin: "That virtue of originality that men so strive after is not newness, as they vainly think, (there is nothing new), it is only genuineness."

In discussing with me, not long ago, the subject upon which I am now engaged, Cardinal Newman

suggested the pregnant inquiry, "Which is the greater assumption? that we can do without religion, or that we can find a substitute for Christianity?" I have hitherto been surveying the substitute for Christianity which the author of *Ecce Homo* has been at the pains of providing and exhibiting to the world. I shall now briefly consider the question whether the need for such a substitute does in truth exist. *Natural Religion*, as I have already more than once noted, assumes that it does. It takes "the scientific view frankly at its worst"[1] as throwing discredit upon the belief "that a Personal Will is the cause of the Universe, that that Will is perfectly benevolent, that that Will has sometimes interfered by miracles with the order of the Universe," which three propositions are considered by its author to sum up the theological view of the universe. "If," he writes, "these propositions exhaust [that view] and science throws discredit upon all of them, evidently theology and science are irreconcilable, and the contest between them must end in the destruction of one or the other" (p. 13). I remark in passing, first, that no theologian—certainly no Catholic theologian—would accept these three propositions as exhausting the theological view of the universe; and secondly, that if we were obliged to admit that physical science throws discredit upon that view, it would by

[1] Preface to the second edition.

no means necessarily follow that physical science and theology are irreconcilable. Ampler acquaintance with the facts might remove the discredit.

> Why then, the scheme your better knowledge broke
> Presently readjusts itself, the small
> Proportioned largelier, parts and whole named new:
> So much, no more, two thousand years have done.

But is it true, as a matter of fact, that physical science throws discredit upon these three propositions? Let us examine this question a little. I must of necessity be brief for I am writing, not a treatise, but a chapter. And I must use the plainest language, for I am writing not for the school but for the general reader. Brevity and plainness of speech do not, however, necessarily imply superficiality, which, in truth, is not unfrequently veiled by a prolix parade of pompous technicalities.

First, then, as to causation. The shepherd in the play, when asked by Touchstone, "Hast any philosophy in thee?" replies, "No more but that I know that the property of rain is to wet, and fire to burn: that good pasture makes fat sheep: and that a great cause of the night is lack of the sun," and upon the strength of this knowledge is pronounced by the clown to be "a natural philosopher." Well, is not in truth the "science" of the mere physicist, however accomplished, *in pari materia* with that of honest Corin? He observes certain sequences of facts, certain antecedents and consequents, but of the *nexus* between them he

knows no more than the most ignorant and foolish of peasants. He talks, indeed, of the laws of Nature, but the expression, convenient as it is in some respects, and true as it is in a sense—and that the highest—is extremely likely to mislead, as he uses it ordinarily. What he calls a law of Nature is only an induction from observed phenomena, a formula which serves compendiously to express them. Dr. Mozley has well observed in his Bampton Lectures, "we only know of law in Nature, in the sense of recurrences in Nature, classes of facts, *like* facts in Nature:"[1]

> In vain the sage with retrospective eye
> Would from the apparent what conclude the why;

physical "science has itself proclaimed the truth that we see no causes in nature"[2]—that is to say, in the phenomena of the external world, taken by themselves. We read in Bacci's *Life of St. Philip Neri* that the saint drew men to the service of God by such a subtle irresistible influence as caused those who watched him to cry out in amazement, "Father Philip draws souls as the magnet draws iron." The most accomplished master of natural science is as little competent to explain the physical attraction as he is to explain the spiritual. He cannot get behind the *fact*, and if you press him for the reason of it—if you ask him why the magnet

[1] *Eight Lectures on Miracles*, p. 50.

[2] *Ibid.* See Dr. Mozley's note on this passage.

draws iron—the only reason he has to give you is, "Because it does." It is just as true now as it was when Bishop Butler wrote in the last century that "the only distinct meaning of the word [natural] is, stated, fixed, or settled," and it is hard to see how he can be refuted when, travelling beyond the boundaries of physics, he goes on to add, "What is natural as much requires and presupposes an intelligent agent to render it so—*i.e.*, to effect it continually, or at stated times—as what is supernatural or miraculous does to effect it for once."[1] Then, again, the indications of design in the universe may well speak to us of a designer, as they spoke three thousand years ago to the Hebrew poet who wrote the Psalm "*Cœli enarrant*," as they spoke but yesterday to the severely disciplined intellect of John Stuart Mill, who, brushing aside the prepossessions and prejudices of a life-time, has recorded his deliberate judgment that "there is a large balance in favour of the probability of creation by intelligence."[2] Sir William Thomson, no mean authority upon a question of physical science, goes further, and speaks, not of "a large balance of probability," but of "overpowering proofs." "Overpowering proofs," he told the

[1] *Analogy*, Part I. c. i. I give, of course, Bishop Butler's words as I find them, but, as will be seen a little later, I do not quite take his view of the supernatural.

[2] *Three Essays on Religion*, p. 174.

British Association, "of intelligence and benevolent design lie all around us; and if ever perplexities, whether metaphysical or scientific, turn us away from them for a time, they come back upon us with irresistible force, showing to us through Nature the influence of a free will, and teaching us that all living beings depend upon one ever-acting Creator and Ruler."[1] And, once more, it is indubitable that matter is inert until acted upon by force, and that we have no knowledge of any other primary[2] cause of force than will. Whence, Mr. Wallace argues in his well-known work, "it does not seem improbable that all force may be will-force, and that the whole universe is not merely dependent upon, but actually is, the will of higher intelligences or of one Supreme Intelligence."[3]

[1] *Address to the British Association*, 1871.

[2] I say "*primary* cause"; of course I do not deny *its own proper causality* to the non-spiritual or matter.

[3] *Contributions to the Theory of Natural Selection*, p. 368. I am, of course, aware of Mr. Mill's remarks upon this view in his *Three Essays on Religion* (pp. 146-150). The subject is too great to be discussed in a footnote. But I may observe that he rests, at bottom, upon the assumption—surely an enormous assumption—that causation is order. Cardinal Newman's argument upon this matter in the *Grammar of Assent* (pp. 66-72, 5th ed.) seems to me to be unanswerable; certainly, it is unanswered. I have no wish to dogmatize—the dogmatism, indeed, appears to be on the other side—but if we go by experience, as it is now the fashion to do, our initial elementary experience would certainly lead us to consider will the great or only cause. To guard against a possible misconception let me here say that I must not be supposed to adopt Mr. Wallace's

If then things are so—as who can disprove?—we may reasonably demur to the assertion that physical science throws discredit upon the position that a Personal Will is the cause of the universe. Let us now glance at the last of the propositions supposed to be condemned by the researches of the physicists—namely, that this Personal Will has sometimes interfered by miracles with the order of the universe. Now, here, as I intimated in an earlier portion of this chapter, I find myself at variance with the author of *Natural Religion* upon a question, and a very important question, of terminology. I do not regard the supernatural as an interference with, or violation of, the order of the universe. I adopt, unreservedly, the doctrine that "nothing is that errs from law." The

view in its entirety or precisely as stated by him. Unquestionably, the analogy between the human will and the Divine Will is imperfect, and Mr. Mill appears to me to be well founded in denying that *our* volition originates. My contention is that Matter is inert until Force has been brought to bear upon it; that all Force must be due to a Primary Force of which it is the manifestation or the effect; that the Primary Force cannot exert itself unless it be self-determined: that to be self-determined is to be living: that to be primarily and utterly self-determined is to be an infinitely self-conscious volition: *ergo*, the primary cause of Force is the Will of God. This is the logical development of the famous argument of St. Thomas Aquinas. He contends that whatever things are moved must be moved by that which is not moved: *a movente non moto*. But Suarez and later writers complete the argument by analyzing the term *movens non motum*, which they consider equivalent to *Ens a se, in se, et per se*, or *Actus Purissimus*.

phenomena which we call supernatural and those which we call natural I view as alike the expression of the Divine Will: a will which acts not capriciously, nor, as the phrase is, arbitrarily, but by law, "attingens a fine usque ad finem, fortiter suaviterque disponens omnia." And so the theologians identify the Divine Will with the Divine Reason. Thus St. Augustine, "Lex æterna est ratio divina vel voluntas Dei,"[1] and St. Thomas Aquinas, "Lex æterna summa ratio in Deo existens."[2] It is by virtue of this law that the sick are healed, whether by the prayer of faith or the prescription of a physician; by the touch of a relic or by a shock from a galvanic battery; that the saint draws souls and that the magnet draws iron. The most ordinary so-called "operations of Nature" may be truly described in the words of St. Gregory as God's daily miracles;[3] and those events, commonly denominated miraculous, of which we read in the Sacred Scriptures, in the Lives of the Saints, and elsewhere, may as truly be called natural, using the word in what, as I just now observed, Bishop Butler notes as its only distinct meaning—namely, stated, fixed, or settled;[4]

[1] *Contra Faustum*, 22.

[2] *Summa*, 1, 2, qu. 83, art 1. But on this and the preceding quotation, see note 2 on page 231.

[3] "Quotidiana Dei miracula ex assiduitate vilescunt."—*Hom. xxvi. in Evan.*

[4] "Stated, fixed, or settled" is a predicate common to natural

for they are the normal manifestations of the order of Grace—an order external to us, invisible, inaccessible to our senses and reasonings, but truly existing and governed by laws, which, like the laws of the physical and the intellectual order, are ordained by the Supreme Lawgiver. Once purge the mind of anthropomorphic conceptions as to the

and supernatural, not the *differentia* of either. And here let me remark that the expression, "Laws of Nature," is a modern technical expression which the spiritualistic philosopher would require, probably, to have defined before employing it. "Natura," in St. Thomas Aquinas, is declared to be "Principium operationis cujusque rei," the Essence of a thing in relation to its activity, or the Essence as manifested *agendo*. Hence "Natura rerum," or "Universitas rerum" (which is the Latin for Nature in the phrase "Laws of Nature") means the Essences of all things created (finite) as manifested and related to each other by their proper inherent activities, which of course are stable or fixed. But since it is not a logical contradiction that these activities should be suspended, arrested, or annihilated (granting an Infinite Creator), it will not be contrary to *Reason* should a miraculous intervention so deal with them, though their suspension or annihilation may be described, loosely and inaccurately, as against the Laws of Nature. By *Reason* is here meant the declarations of necessary Thought as to possibility and impossibility, or the canons of contradiction, the only proper significance of the word in discussions about miracles. Hence, to say that miracles have their laws, is not to deny that they are by the Free Will of God. For creation is by the Fiat of Divine Power and Freedom, and yet proceeds upon law—that is to say, upon a settled plan and inherent sequence of cause and effect. But it is common with Mr. Mill and his school to think of law as *necessary inviolable* sequence; whereas it is but a fixed mode of action whether *necessarily or freely* determined; and it is a part of law that some activities should be liable to suspension or arrestment by others, and especially by the First Cause.

Divine government, and the notion of any essential opposition between the natural and the supernatural disappears. Sanctity, which means likeness to God, a partaking of the Divine nature, is as truly a force as light or heat, and enters as truly into the great order of the universe. There is a passage in M. Renan's *Vie de Jésus* worth citing in this connection. "La nature lui obéit," he writes; "mais elle obéit aussi à quiconque croit et prie; la foi peut tout. Il faut se rappeler que nulle idée des lois de la nature ne venait, dans son esprit ni dans celui de ses auditeurs, marquer la limite de l'impossible. . . . . Ces mots de 'surhumain' et de 'surnaturel,' empruntés à notre théologie mesquine, n'avaient pas de sens dans la haute conscience religieuse de Jésus. Pour lui, la nature et le développement de l'humanité n'étaient pas des règnes limités hors de Dieu, de chétives réalités assujetties aux lois d'un empirisme désesperant. Il n'y avait pas pour lui de surnaturel, car il n'y avait pas pour lui de nature. Ivre de l'amour infini, il oubliait la lourde chaîne qui tient l'esprit captif; il franchissait d'un bond l'abîme, infranchissable pour la plupart, que la médiocrité des facultés humaines trace entre l'homme et Dieu."[1] These words seem to me to express a great truth. The religious mind conceives of the natural, not as opposed to the supernatural, but as an outlying

[1] *Vie de Jésus*, p. 247.

province of it; of the economy of the physical world as the complement of the economy of Grace. And to those who thus think, the great objection urged by so many philosophers, from Spinoza downwards—not to go further back—that miracles, as the violation of an unchangeable order, make God contradict himself, and so are unworthy of being attributed to the All-Wise, is without meaning.[1] The most stupendous incident in the "Acta Sanctorum" is, as I deem, not less the manifestation of law than is the fall of a sparrow.[2] The

[1] Another objection very commonly urged in the present day, and expressed with his usual clearness by M. Renan, "le premier principe de la critique est que le miracle n'a point de place dans le tissu des choses humaines," will be considered later on. See page 270.

[2] When Mr. Mill says (*Three Essays on Religion*, p. 224), "The argument that a miracle may be the fulfilment of a law in the same sense in which the ordinary events of Nature are fulfilments of laws, seems to indicate an imperfect conception of what is meant by a law and what constitutes a miracle," all he really means is that this argument involves a conception of law and of miracle different from his own, which is undoubtedly true. Upon this subject I remark as follows: There is a necessary will (*spontaneum non liberum*) and a free will (*liberum non spontaneum*); and these are in God on the scale of infinite perfection, as they are in man finitely. With Mr. Mill, as I have observed in a previous note, law is taken to signify "invariable, necessary sequence"; and its test is, that given the same circumstances, the same thing will occur. But it is essential to Free Will (whether in God or man) that given the same circumstances, the same thing need not, may not, and perhaps will not, occur. However, an act may be free *in causa* which *hic et nunc must* happen; the Free Will having done that by choice which brings as a necessary consequence something else. For

budding of a rose and the resurrection of Jesus Christ are equally the effect of the One Motive Force, which is the cause of all phenomena, of the Volition of the Maker, Nourisher, Guardian, Governor, Worker, Perfecter of all. Once admit

there are many things which would involve contradiction and so be impossible, did not certain consequences follow them. This promised, it is clear that the antithesis of Mr. Mill's "Law" is Free Will. Law and antecedent necessity to Mr. Mill are one and the same. But Law in Catholic terminology means the Will of God decreeing freely or not freely, according to the subject-matter; and is not opposed to Free-Will. It guides, it need not coerce or necessitate, though it may. Neither, in one sense, is Law synonymous with Reason, for that is according to Reason, simply, which does not involve a contradiction, whether it be done freely or of necessity; and many things are possible, or non-contradictives, that Law does not prescribe. Nor again does Free-Will mean lawless in the sense of irrational; or causeless, in the sense of having no motive: "contra legem," "præter legem," is not "contra rationem," "præter rationem." The Divine Will, then, may be free, yet act according to Law, namely, its own freely-determined Law. And it may act "not according to Law," and yet act according to Reason. In this sense, then, theologians identify the Divine Will with the Divine Reason—I mean, they insist that God's Will is always according to Reason—in this sense, but, as I think, not in any other. For the Divine Will is antecedently free as regards all things which are not God; but the Divine Intellect is not free in the same way. St. Augustine always tends to view things in the concrete, not distinguishing their "rationes formales," or distinguishing them vaguely. And Ratio with him does not mean Reason merely, but living Reason, or the Reasoning Being, the Soul. When St. Thomas Aquinas speaks of Lex Æterna he means the Necessary Law of Morality concerning which God is not free, because in decreeing it He is but decreeing that there is no Righteousness except by imitation of Him.

The root of all these difficulties and of all the confusion in

what is involved in the very idea of God as it exists in Catholic theology—as it is set forth, for example, in the treatise of St. Thomas Aquinas *De Deo*—and the notion of miracles as abnormal, as infractions of order, as violations of law, will be seen to be utterly erroneous.

And now one word as to the bearing of physical science upon the doctrine of the Divine goodness[1]

speech which they have brought forth is this: the mystery of Free-Will in God, the Unchangeable and Eternal. The great truth taught in the words of the Vatican Council, "Deus, *liberrimo consilio* condidit universa," must ever be borne in mind. Undoubtedly, there are no afterthoughts in God. But neither is there a past in which He decreed once for all what was to be and what was not to be. He is the Eternal Now. But still all events are the fulfilment of His Will, and contribute to the working out of the scheme which He has traced for creation. Feeble is human speech to deal with such high matters, serving, at the best, but dimly to adumbrate ineffable truths. Most true is Goethe's saying, "Words are good, but not the best: the best cannot be expressed in words." My point, however, is that there is, on the one hand, a connection of events with events all through creation and an intelligible sequence, while, on the other, the Free-Will of man is a determining force as regards his own spiritual actions, as is the Free-Will of God in respect of the whole creation, and that miracles are neither afterthoughts, nor irregularities, nor contradictions, but at once free and according to law. Miracles are not abnormal, unless Free-Will is a reduction of Kosmos to Chaos, and the negation of Reason altogether.

[1] I say "the Doctrine of the Divine goodness," because that is, as I think, what the author of *Natural Religion* means. As to the "simple, absolute benevolence"—"benevolence," indeed, is a milk-and-water expression, "God is love"—which "some men seem to think the only character of the Author of Nature," it is enough to

—the second of the theological positions which, as we have seen, the author of *Natural Religion* assumes to be discredited by physical science. No doubt he had in his mind what has been so strongly stated by the late Mr. Mill: "Not even on the most distorted and contracted theory of good, which ever was framed by religious or philosophical fanaticism, can the government of Nature be made to resemble the work of a being at once good and omnipotent."[1] Now there can be no question that physical nature gives the lie to that shallow optimism which prates of the best of all conceivable worlds, and hardly consents to recognize evil, save as a "lower form of good"; unquestionably recent researches of physicists have brought out with quite startling clearness what St. Paul calls the subjection of the creature to vanity. Ruin, waste, decay, are written upon every feature of the natural order. All that is joyful in it is

refer to Bishop Butler's striking chapter on *The Moral Government of God* (*Analogy*, Part I. c. iii.) I will here merely observe that although, doubtless, God's attribute is Love of the creation, He is not only Love, but Sanctity, Justice, Creative Power, Force, Providence; and whereas, considered as a Unit He is infinite, He is not infinite—I speak under correction—viewed in those aspects, abstractions, or attributes which, separately taken, are necessary for our subjective view of Him. I allow that God's power and His "benevolence" may in some cases work out different ends, as if separate entities, but still maintain—what the author of *Natural Religion* ignores—that God in His very essence is not only 'Benevolence," but Sanctity, and the rest also; *all as One in His Oneness.*

[1] *Three Essays on Religion*, p. 38.

based on suffering; all that lives, on death; every thrill of pleasure which we receive from the phenomenal world is the outcome of inconceivable agonies during incalculable periods of time. But how does this discredit the teaching of theology as to God's goodness? Theology recognizes, and recognizes far more fully than the mere physicist, the abounding misery that is in the world, the terribleness of that "unutterable curse which hangs upon mankind," for it sees not only what he sees, but what is infinitely sadder and more appalling, the vision of moral evil presented by the heart and conscience of man, by every page in the history of the individual and of the race. It was not reserved for professors of physical science in the nineteenth century to bring to light the fact that "the world is out of joint," and thereby to discredit the theological view of the universe. Theology knows only too well that life is "a dread machinery of sin and sorrow." It is the very existence of the vast aboriginal calamity, whatever it may have been, in which the human race, the whole creation, is involved, that forms the ground for the need of the revelation which Christianity professes to bring. If there were no evil, there would be no need of a deliverance from evil. Of course, why evil has been suffered to arise, why it is suffered to exist, by the Perfect Being, of whom it is truly said that He is God, because he is the highest Good, we know not, and no search will make us know. All

we know is that it is not from Him, of whom, and for whom, and by whom, are all things; "because it has no substance of its own, but is only the defect, excess, perversion, or corruption of that which has substance." I shall have to return to the subject hereafter.[1] For the present it must suffice to remark that while the existence of evil is a mystery—one of the countless mysteries surrounding human life—which, after the best use of reason, must be put aside as beyond reason it is also a fact, and a fact which is so far from discrediting the theological view of the universe, that it is a primary and necessary element of that view.

Thus much as to physical science and the propositions in which the author of *Natural Religion* supposes the theological view of the universe to be summed up. But, as he notes, the case of Modern Thought against Christianity does not rest merely upon physical science, properly so called, but upon the extension of its methods to the whole domain of knowledge (p. 7), the practical effect being the reduction of religion to superstition, of anthropology to physiology, of metaphysics to physics, of ethics to the result of temperament or the promptings of self-interest, of man's personality to the summation of a series of dynamic conditions

[1] See pp. 257—259 and p. 380.

of particles of matter. It seems to me that the issue before the world is between Christianity and a more or less sublimated form of Materialism, which is most aptly termed Naturalism; a system which rejects as antiquated the ideas of final causes, of Providence, of the soul and its immortality; which allows of no other realities than those of the physical order, and makes of Nature man's highest ideal: and this issue is not in the least affected by decking out Naturalism in some borrowed garments of Spiritualism, and calling it "Natural Christianity," however skilfully the travesty be made.

It is not indeed to the phrase itself, but to this use of it, that I take exception. Tertullian speaks of Natural Christianity — "testimonium animæ naturaliter Christianæ"; and we may safely agree with Theodore Parker: "so far as a man has real religion, so far has he Christianity." I say this without any wish to disparage the great non-Christian systems which have done, and are doing, so much to meet the religious wants of human nature. There is a sense in which Mr. Herbert Spencer's words seem to me to be unquestionably true: "Speaking generally the religion current in each age, and among each people, has been as near an approximation to the truth as it was possible, then and there, for them to receive."[1] Truths there are, religious and ethical, with which the human conscience cannot dispense. And it is as

[1] First Principles § 32.

the repositories, the sanctuaries of these primary verities that the lower forms of religion have lasted for so many ages, and are with us unto this day. But whatever advance they may still be making in particular states of civilisation, it seems not temerarious to affirm that their vitality is almost exhausted, their part well-nigh played. Their power of development is spent, and, as soon as an idea ceases to develop, it begins to die. Few, I take it, would gravely argue that either Buddhism or Mohammedanism—the only two religions besides Christianity which so much as claim universality—is likely seriously to dispute the future of the world with Christianity. But, as in the inquiry which I have undertaken it is of the utmost importance that I should be quite accurate and quite frank, it will be better for me, in what I am immediately about to write, to deal specially with that form of the Christian religion which the Catholic Church presents. In the first place Catholicity is a precise and definite term, which Christianity is not. As Auguste Comte remarks: "Every one knows what a Catholic is, whilst the best intellect dares not flatter himself that he comprehends what a Christian is; for a Christian may belong indefinitely to any one of the thousand incoherent shades which separate primitive Lutheranism from actual Deism."[1] I may be able—I think I am able—to give a reason

[1] *Cours de Philosophie Positive*, vol. v. p. 299.

for the hope that is in me as a Catholic. I could not offer myself with the same confidence to speak for the Lutheran or the Deist, much as I have, and rejoice to have, in common with both. Secondly, the real question before the world is, whether the Supernatural exists or not; exists objectively as a fact, and subjectively for us. The Materialism, the Naturalism of the day, calling itself, in the intellectual order, Science, and in the political order, Revolution, denies flatly that behind the forces of Nature there is anything, or anything which we can know. The Catholic Church, on the other hand, is the system which most consistently, unflinchingly, and logically maintains the existence of an order of Grace, in a real, and not merely a notional sense. Of course, other forms of Christianity, in so far as they rest upon a supernatural foundation, and teach supernatural truth, are vitally interested in this great issue. But the Catholic Church is in the fore-front of the hottest battle. Nor need we ask, *Quare fremuerunt gentes?* The very pretensions she makes, as the Prophet of God, to supernatural power, to the "signs following," whereby she still claims to confirm her Divine infallible word, as she claimed two thousand years ago, when she first set out to teach all nations, earn for her a prophet's reward. It is her glory that among the multitudinous religions of men she is specially singled out by the anti-Christian movement as its irreconcilable foe. The fight between

her and the Naturalism of the age, whether as expounded under the name of science by professors, or as carried out in the public order by the politicians of Jacobinism, is a fight unto death.

And now as to the case against Christianity, as presented to the world in the creed of the Catholic Church. I suppose, in the estimation of the vast majority of Englishmen, the impression prevails that this creed is too palpably absurd to be worth arguing against. Nor is such an impression confined to the ignorant, as the following story, which I have from a well-known Catholic ecclesiastic, may serve to show. Some years ago, the brother of a very distinguished luminary of the law embraced Catholicity, and went in fear and trembling to break the news to the great man. The only remark the tidings drew from him was: "Well, I daresay it's a good enough religion for such a damned fool as you." There are, of course, cases where this uncomplimentary view of those who hold the Catholic faith is obviously inadmissable. And, in such cases, the usual explanation—not a more flattering one indeed—is that of fear. Swift, in his brutal and blasphemous burlesque of one of the most august and heart-subduing of religious mysteries, represents an anathema as the only "thundering proof" offered by "Lord Peter" in support of the proposition that a slice from a twelve-penny loaf is excellent good mutton: "Look ye, gentlemen, cries Peter, in a rage, to convince you

what a couple of blind, ignorant, positive, wilful puppies you are, I shall use but this plain argument. By God, it is true, good, natural mutton, as any in Leadenhall Market, and God confound you both eternally if you offer to believe otherwise." Quite in accordance with this view is the statement so often made that Cardinal Newman confines his defence of his creed to "the threat and the consequent scare" that it is the only possible alternative to Atheism, a statement the utter erroneousness of which I took occasion, some time ago, to point out.[1] Let me then say, once for all, that, so far as I am concerned, I appeal in defence of my religious belief to reason, which, as Butler admirably observes, "is, indeed, the only faculty we have wherewith to judge concerning anything, even religion itself." If Christianity, if Catholicity, be irrational, if it can be received only upon condition of our shutting the eyes of the understanding, its doom is sealed. The question, therefore, whether in any intellectual province any fact has been established incompatible with the unique, the supreme claims of Jesus Christ as a teacher come from God, or of His Church as the divinely appointed oracle of religious truth, is most pertinent to the inquiry upon which I have entered. And upon that question I intend to

[1] In a letter to the *St. James's Gazette*, dated the 18th Nov. 1880, which Cardinal Newman has done me the honour to adopt and to reprint in the fifth edition of his *Grammar of Assent* (p. 500).

express myself with entire candour. "It is fit things be stated and considered as they really are." "Things are what they are, and the consequences of them will be what they will be: why, then, should we desire to be deceived?"

Now what is the way in which the objections to the Christian religion in general, and to the Catholic faith in particular, present themselves, in fact, to the nineteenth-century mind? Suppose a man, who has enjoyed and profited by the best advantages offered by one of our great English universities: suppose that he has further received the intellectual discipline conferred by the study of the law—perhaps the best of all disciplines for accuracy of thought and appreciation of evidence; that the opportunities of his life have enabled him to observe "the manners and cities of many men"; that his mind, in maturer age, has not been so entirely engrossed by professional duties, or by public affairs—invaluable as the training-ground where the student or the scholar passes from the abstract to the concrete, from images to facts, from theory to practice—as to withdraw him from historical and philosophical research: suppose, I say, such a man, after the best consideration he could give to the matter, and in spite of strong contrary prepossessions and interests, to have decided that so good a case exists for Christianity, and for the Catholic form of it, as to make it a matter of conscience and duty with him to submit

himself to the Church of Rome; and then imagine him meeting a friend whose voice and face, little changed by twenty years of the world's wear and tear, bring back with strange vividness memories of childhood and youth—

> "Actæ non alio rege puertiæ
> Mutatæque simul togæ."

Nature herself in such a case seems to suggest a quiet dinner together. It is arranged. The next evening finds Damon and Pythias (I know I ought to say Phintias, but habit is too strong) at table in a quiet corner of the Apollo Club. In half-an-hour the two friends are talking with as little restraint as they used to talk two decades ago at St. Mungo's College. I proceed to set down a fragment of their conversation.

PYTHIAS. Well, my dear Damon, times are changed indeed since I picked you off the College railings and delivered you from danger of impalement. I wonder whether anybody now gets in that way, in the small hours of the night. I should not like to try it. "Tempora mutantur nos et mutamur in illis." And so you have become a holy Roman. That is a change indeed. You used, I remember, to be the most thoroughgoing sceptic of the whole lot of us.

DAMON. I am not disposed to say anything against that same scepticism. There is a fruitful doubt as there is a fruitful grief. I am as little

inclined now as I was twenty years ago to make my judgment blind. If, after full inquiry and long reflection, I had thought the Catholic creed irrational, if I had discovered it to be in conflict with any truth, I could not have accepted it. To have found it teaching, as of faith, any demonstrated error, would have been, as Mr. Leslie Stephen would say, to have found it out; for that would have been fatal to its claims as the oracle of the God of Truth.

PYTHIAS. 'Tis strange, 'tis passing strange: and I am curious to know—we are too old friends for you to attribute to me the impertinence of an idle curiosity—I am curious to know how you got over difficulties which, as I remember, we both felt strongly twenty years ago, and which I feel as strongly still.

DAMON. I will gladly tell you anything I can, and, although I do not profess, like the clown in the play, to have an answer that will fit all questions, still I say, with the clown, "Spare me not." But let us know what we start from. Here, too, it is true "c'est le premier pas qui coûte." May I take it that you believe in God—in the old acceptation I mean: not as a mere *anima mundi*, nor as the totality of the forces of the universe, nor as an abstraction of the mind, like Humanity with a big H, but as a person in the most transcendent sense of the term, and as the person who put personality into us?

PYTHIAS. You remember the verse of Goethe:—

"Mein Liebchen, wer darf sagen,
Ich glaub' an Gott?
Magst Priester oder Weise fragen,
Und ihre Antwort scheint nur Spott
Ueber den Frager zu sein."

It seems to me the last word on the question.

DAMON. Yes, indeed. I know the lines well, too well: "So sweet a voice and vague, fatal to men." I remember that they long rang in my ears as the knell of Theism, until I rose up against their authority and fought my doubts for myself. Then I am to begin with the beginning, and to tell you how I got over the difficulties of the Theistic hypothesis? Well, perhaps I may say that I feel them now as strongly as I ever did. Only they have sunk into another place in my mind. A difficulty is one thing. A doubt is quite another. What inexplicable difficulties attend every biological theory that has ever been put forward! Yet who doubts the fact of life? Then again the difficulties of the Atheistic or the Agnostic hypothesis seem to me to be far greater than those of the Theistic: far harder to reconcile with facts. So far as I know, Butler's pregnant question has never received an affirmative answer:—"Will any man in his senses say that it is less difficult to conceive how the world came to be, and to continue as it is, without, than with, an intelligent author and governor of it?" I was reading in a book of

Schweizer's[1] only this morning,—"It is indubitable that the human mind has from the earliest times worshipped as the higher truth the reality which is hidden behind phenomena but consciously felt in the heart, and has ascribed to it greater analogy with ideas than with the primary elements of the phenomenal world, such as matter and force." Now this unquestionable fact seems to me a very momentous fact, not in the least robbed of its significance because a certain school of scientists decline to recognize anything beyond the physical phenomena to which the methods of their science necessarily restrict them. Their assumption that their way of investigation is the sole instrument of discovering truth, seems to me obviously false. As we used to read in Plato: "Being is not perceived by sense, nor is goodness, beauty, resemblance, difference, number." And St. Augustine says: "God is nearer, more related to us, and therefore more easily known by us, than any sensible, corporeal thing." I hold that the senses are but one, and by no means the surest, of the ways of finding truth; that there are in the moral order, as in the mathematical, certain necessary truths, not known experimentally but intuitively, recognized

[1] The passage will be found in his *Die Zukunft der Religion*, p. 94. It is much to be regretted that this writer, perhaps the first of living Protestant theologians—I know not who else among them combines such profound philosophical culture, such deep religious feeling, and such delicate critical acumen—is so little read in England.

instinctively as true by the cognitive faculty, truths which are their own sufficient vouchers and justifications; in other words, that there is an *a priori* element in our knowledge, and that our instinctive faculties are rather to be trusted than any conclusions derived by the phenomenist, through "inductive processes" from his narrow and arbitrarily restricted range of "experienced facts." Hence it is that the argument of the Divine existence drawn from conscience, from Kant's categorical imperative of duty, comes home to me with such irresistible force that I do not hesitate to say with Julius Müller: "Conscience is the consciousness of God." Subsidiary (as I account of them) to this supreme proof there are of course others; the argument from design, the argument from first causes, the ontological argument urged by St. Anselm and Descartes, from the necessary existence of an archetype corresponding to our idea of an infinite and immense Being, which Kant seems to me to have misapprehended and not to have refuted.[1] It must be owned that to many minds, of which it would be impertinent to speak otherwise than with deep respect, none of these arguments, nor all of them together, bring conviction. I cannot help that. I can answer only for myself. But I suppose that what Mill says in his

[1] On Kant's well-known criticism of this argument see *The Philosophy of Kant*, by Edw. Caird, c. xviii.; and *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*, by John Caird, D.D. c. 5.

Autobiography about the fundamental difference between the two schools of philosophy—that of intuition and that of association and experience—is profoundly true.

PYTHIAS. I suppose so. But conscience—you know that the late Professor Clifford has recorded his opinion that it is of human invention: that it is "the voice of Man, ingrained in our hearts, commanding us to work for Man"; that it "springs out of the habit of judging things from the point of view of all, and not of one."

DAMON. I remember the passage, and have always prized it as a curious specimen of dogmatic Materialism, enforced as it is by a sort of *ex cathedrâ* "I say."[1] It seems to me, however, that this view of conscience is out of harmony with "experienced facts." Let any one consider what the monitions of his individual conscience are, and he certainly will not find that they are mandates "to work for man":

"Nil conscire sibi, nulla pallescere culpa,"

says the ancient poet, and he speaks more wisely than the modern professor. The voice of conscience is mainly an accusing voice. Self-disapproval, guilt, remorse—these are its most notable phenomena; it speaks of a law broken and of a Lawgiver outraged; and thus it is the creative principle of natural religion.

[1] The passage referred to will be found in the late Professor Clifford's *Lectures and Essays*, vol. ii. pp. 238-9:—"Such as we are—moral and rational beings— . . . . I say Man has made us," &c.

PYTHIAS. Well, then, you know there are the Darwinian and the Spencerian theories as to the origin of conscience. And there is the spectre of Evolution, feared by the religious world.

DAMON. Religion is one thing: "the religious world"—the phrase is significant—and its fears are quite another.

PYTHIAS. I hope so, for the sake of religion. But you have considered the bearing of the doctrine of Evolution upon the Theistic controversy generally, and the Christian theory in particular?

DAMON. Yes. "The doctrine of Evolution" of course, a somewhat ambiguous term. There are several doctrines of Evolution in the world. But if I may take you to mean by it the development of species in time from less complicated organisms, it seems to me to be almost proved: or, to speak more accurately, I think that a very strong presumption has been established that animals generally are modified descendants of more simple types, and that it is not improbable that every form of life on the earth may have originally sprung from some monad germ. To me, the analogy presented by the development of intellectual ideas and the formation of religious dogma is a weighty argument in favour of this doctrine of Evolution; for law reigns everywhere and is everywhere the same in its main features. But the accounts given by Messrs Darwin and Spencer of the *modus operandi* are, *pace* those illustrious men, mere nude hypotheses.

I confess that "natural selection" and "the survival of the fittest" seem to me big words covering extremely poor conceptions.

PYTHIAS. Well, but as to the bearing of the doctrine of Evolution upon Theism?

DAMON. Evolution does not go beyond phenomena. Of causation, in the proper sense of the word, it tells us nothing whatever. It merely removes the First Cause indefinitely farther off, and, as a very able Jewish writer has remarked, "instead of obscuring our ideas of the Divine Omnipotence, only increases a thousandfold our reverence for the Being who could endow an amorphous cell of protoplasm with such infinite potentialities"

PYTHIAS. You find no difficulty, apparently, in admitting that man is, or rather very probably may be, the last term in a long series of biological expansion. But let us go back to the question of conscience. Mr. Herbert Spencer, while admitting the existence in the human mind of certain fundamental moral intuitions, quite independent of conscious experience, accounts for them by a process of psychical or cerebral laws and developments which the nervous modifications of past generations have undergone. And the late Mr. Darwin thought it probable in a high degree that any animal whatever, endowed with well-marked social instincts, would inevitably acquire a moral sense or conscience, as soon as its intellectual powers had become as

well developed, or nearly as well developed, as man's.

DAMON. I have the greatest respect for all facts, and consider that we owe much, both to Mr. Darwin and to Mr. Spencer, for what they have done to collect and classify facts. But when they proceed to deductions, when they talk of what is probable, I often find myself unable to accompany them. I suppose our criteria of probability differ. Still, I do not deny that there is probably much truth in these speculations. By the way, do you happen to know Mr. St. George Mivart's writings?

PYTHIAS. I am ashamed to say I do not; ashamed, because I understand he is on all hands allowed to be one of the first of living Naturalists. I dimly recollect a controversy between him and Professor Huxley, some years ago, in which he was generally considered to have held his ground. But I forget the precise point upon which it turned.

DAMON. It was a point of much importance, and certainly Mr. Mivart's arguments were unanswered. Let me recommend you to get his writings—particularly his *Genesis of Species*, his *Lessons from Nature*, his masterly monograph on the Cat, and, above all, his admirable work—most fruitful and suggestive it is—*Nature and Thought*. I am pretty confident that his method of ratiocination will approve itself to you as safer, as more truly scientific, than that which has been followed by

the authors of the brilliant but loosely-knit speculations so popular for the moment.

PYTHIAS. Thanks; I will get the books. But as to the question—the burning question—of conscience. It is certain that we see something very like what we call conscience in the animals which we call lower. Take my wife's dog Spider, for example; a strictly conscientious dog, ruled more habitually than I am, I fear, by his moral sense—his notions of right and wrong.

DAMON. By his notions of right and wrong you mean his sense of what is approved and forbidden by his mistress.

PYTHIAS. Yes. I take it that his ethical standard is supplied by her approval and disapproval.

DAMON. Well, Lord Bacon says, a man is as a god to his dog. I confess it seems to me as unquestionable that in some of the lower animals we may trace a moral sense, as it is that they possess most of the faculties which in man we call mind. But how little do we really know about them, their state, their interests, and their destiny; whether they can sin or not; whether they are under punishment; whether they are to live after this life. It seems, I own, to me that the weight of evidence (such as it is) is in favour of an affirmative answer to these questions. The stories of St. Francis preaching to his sisters the birds, or St. Anthony of Padua to the fishes, or Jelâl to the dogs, seem to me something more than quaint legends. The fellow-

ship that exists between the choice specimens of human goodness and God's humbler creatures, what the Muslim hagiologist calls "their power of communing heart to heart," is a most significant fact. Again it is a most curious, quite an arousing thought, how the human mind seems now to be travelling back to the doctrine of the Buddha—not that he originated it—as to the essential likeness between men and other animals: a doctrine by no means unfruitful upon the lips of that great Teacher who deduced from it such emphatic lessons of kindness, nay, of courtesy, to what we call, with extremely misplaced contempt, the brute creation. Think of that wonderful legend in the *Buddhist Birth Stories*, how Sakka, the great King of the Gods, when worsted in his fight with the Titans, and fleeing in his famous Chariot of Glory, a hundred-and-fifty leagues in length, turned aside, at the risk of falling into the hands of his foes, out of pity for the "young of Winged Creatures," whose cries smote upon his ear, as the silk Cotton-Tree Forest fell, torn up by the swiftness of his Car, and the nestlings tumbled over and over into the great deep. "Let not these creatures suffer on our account. Let us not, for the sake of our supremacy, put the living to pain." How different this spirit from that which animates the so-called "Priests of Science" in our own day, more brutalised than the meanest of the beasts whose agonies they watch with indifference or complacency: men whose atheistic ferocity shrinks

from no extremity of torture to their helpless victims —"our Poor Relations"—on the chance of some great discovery—never made—which may minister to their lust of lucre or of notoriety: for that disinterested love of the human race prompts their atrocious cruelties I do not believe and I have never met with any man who did really believe it. But enough of this sickening subject; too much, indeed. Let us go back to your question. I believe that the faculty we call conscience in man is a form of the soul itself, is innate in us, although the causes which the Associationists and Evolutionists dwell upon may have done much to develope it; and I am far from denying that something very like it may be innate, whether developed little, or not at all, in all sentient creatures. But if it could be proved that conscience is not primary but derivative, I should reverence it just as much, for it would be equally from God; His gift to man, to be the perpetual witness for Himself, the organ whereby He is known.

PYTHIAS. At all events your Theism is thorough: "Dieu se retrouve à la fin de tout." And what do you say to Spontaneous Generation?

DAMON. I would say, first, that I hardly see how it touches the Theistic, or the Catholic position. As a matter of fact, Catholics, generally, believed it until the other day. St. Thomas Aquinas and Suarez seem to have taken it for granted. Secondly, for myself, I ask permission not to be peremptorily called upon to believe it until it is proved, surely

a modest enough request. Professor Allman told the British Association at Sheffield "No one has ever yet built up one particle of living matter out of lifeless elements"; not, of course, a conclusive argument, nor to me, a weighty argument against the theory, which I incline to hold. But shall we ever see the building up of that one particle?

PYTHIAS. There is no knowing what we may see. Swift tells us of certain Nuremburgers who undertook to construct a man of wood and leather that should reason as well as most country parsons. The science of the nineteenth century may actually produce that man. But let us go on. The argument from conscience, and the various other arguments, *à posteriori* and *à priori*, you hold sufficient to warrant our believing in the existence of God. But what God? I suppose we may say an Infinite and Absolutely Perfect Being; and so Omnipotent, Omniscient, All-Loving. But how does the God of Christianity correspond with this idea? Consider the accounts which your Sacred Books put forward. I do not press the manifest anthropomorphism of the ancient Hebrew narratives; I will suppose, for the present, that no one now accepts them literally as history: *nec pueri credunt*. Let us take it, if you like, that the first chapter of the Bible is "a sublime Psalm of creation": that the story of Eve and the apple is "the allegory of a moral fact"—as an episcopal champion of orthodoxy has expressed it—and so of the rest of those

venerable myths, of many of which, by the way, we possess what seem to be far older versions, in the legends deciphered by the late Mr. George Smith, and published in his *Chaldean Account of Genesis:* legends which well-nigh all Assyrian scholars consider to have been current before the Semitic tribes entered Mesopotamia. My difficulty is as to the general picture of the Divine character and government which Christianity presents. Omnipotence calling into existence the human race and the various tribes of sentient animals, while Omniscience knew the sufferings of countless ages which lay before them—how is this to be reconciled with Infinite Love? Consider human existence—the life even of the healthiest of us, what Pope called his, a "long disease," or as Schopenhauer said, "a struggle against death with the certainty of being conquered"; consider what you call—and I too, in perhaps another sense—moral evil. It was a bishop, as I remember, who asked, "What does civil history acquaint us with, but the incorrigible rogueries of mankind, or ecclesiastical history more than their follies?" Consider—

> "What is the course of the life
> Of mortal men on the earth?
> Most men eddy about
> Here and there—eat and drink,
> Chatter, and love, and hate,
> Gather and squander, are raised
> Aloft, are hurled in the dust,
> Striving blindly, achieving
> Nothing, and then they die—

> Perish! and no one asks
> Who or what they have been,
> More than he asks what waves,
> In the moonlit solitudes mild
> Of the midmost Ocean, have swelled,
> Foam'd for a moment, and gone.

And what shall we say of the sufferings of the lower animals; of their cruelty to one another, of man's cruelty to them. Without going your lengths about vivisection, I am quite at one with Schopenhauer when he denies our right to practise it, especially on the higher vertebrates. I frankly own it makes me ill to think of the performances of a man like M. Paul Bert. Consider all this, and tell me, if you can, how it is reconcilable with the conception of a Creator of whom you say that He is God, because He is the highest Good. I agree with Coupeau in *L'Assommoir*: "S'il y a un Dieu, il arrange drôlement les choses." I frankly confess that I think the Buddhist synthesis a far better one than the Christian. That a perfect Creator can have made so imperfect a world is surely, to use Pontifical language, a *deliramentum*.

DAMON. I suppose it is this great mystery which more than anything else at the present day drives men into the falsehood of extremes: into Positivism on the one hand, which is the negation of evil; into Pessimism on the other, which is the negation of good. I do not wonder at it. What question is there which presses upon any one, who really tries to face it, with such overwhelming severity as the

question of the Moral Government of the world? Yes, as Descartes said, "God must transcend in excellence my highest idea of excellence." The perfection of the moral law—those unwritten and unchanging and eternal laws of the noblest passage in Greek tragedy—which is to me a self-evident, axiomatic, intuitive truth, witnesses for the perfection of the Divine Lawgiver. "*Bonum nullo indigens bono*," in St. Augustine's phrase, is the very sum of our conception of God. How reconcile with that absolute goodness the suffering of a moment's pain by any living creature? How reconcile with it the existence of the "purblind race of miserable men"? I can no more reconcile it than you. It is one of the overwhelming, heart-piercing mysteries that encompass human life. One out of many. Our ignorance here is the measure of our knowledge of all the profounder problems of existence. "Thy judgments are like the great deep."

> Però nella giustizia sempiterna
> La vista che riceve il vostro mondo,
> Com' occhio per lo mare, entro s'interna;
> Che, benchè dalla proda veggia il fondo,
> In pelago nol vede, e nondimeno
> Egli è, ma cela lui l'esser profondo.

Let us accept any "beam in darkness" which penetrates to us. And is not the Christian explanation, upon the face of it, more reasonable than any other? "Sin entered into the world, and death by sin," sin being, as St. Augustine tells us,

anything done, said. or designed against the Eternal Law. And does not the teaching of all religions echo back the Apostolic dictum? From the rudest fetishism to the more elaborate theologies, all speak of the sense of sin deep-rooted in the human conscience. Here, of course, we are thrown back upon another of those unsolved and insoluble mysteries that surround man on all sides, the mystery of free will, as to which I do not see how we can get further than St. Augustine's teaching, that a world in which a moral order or period of probation was established, wherein rational creatures should work out their own eternal destiny by their own merit, is more excellent than one containing no such order; and that the existence of this moral order implies liberty to sin, as a concomitant of liberty to do right. A created being is a finite being, and a finite being is an imperfect being, and, as Leibnitz tells us, the limitation of the finite makes evil possible. For the rest, the condition of the world should surely predispose us to welcome the revelation of the goodness and loving-kindness of the Great Father which Christianity professes to bring.

PYTHIAS. Well here we are, after twenty years of separation, reasoning high, like Milton's devils—

> Of Providence, foreknowledge, will and fate,
> Fixed fate, free will, and knowledge absolute,

but happily amid pleasanter surroundings. But seriously, my dear fellow, does it appear to you

that the Christian revelation is a very successful correction of the aboriginal calamity—so terrible in its results, whatever it may have been—in which mankind is involved? A system introduced so late in the world's history, and now, after two thousand years have passed away, professed, as statisticians reckon, in all its multifarious and jarring varieties, by only some thirty per cent. of the human race—such Christians, too, as most of the adherents they assign to it are—seems to me a worse failure even than the creation. That the Infinite and Eternal God should have descended to this planet of ours—mere speck as it is in the illimitable universe—and should have made the oblation of His life and the sacrifice of His death for a race of beings of whom the vast proportion have never heard of Him, while, of those who have heard, so very few are much the better for it, is more inconceivable than that a perfect Being should have called into existence such a world. At least you thought so once. I think so now.

DAMON. Here again I recognise an unfathomable mystery. You shake the head. You do not like that term. But surely Pascal speaks the words of truth and soberness when he says: "La dernière démarche de la raison est de savoir qu'il y a une infinité de choses qui la surpassent." It is a commonplace of Catholic theology, "Totum desinit in mysterium," and many of our great writers have been led to connect the Incarnation with some vast

divine purpose of which we are ignorant. Consider the immensity of our ignorance.

> Or tu chi se', che vuoi sedere a scranna
> Per giudicar da lungi mille miglia
> Con la veduta corta d'una spanna?

The objection taken to Christianity on account of its late introduction to the world, its partial reception by men, and its incomplete triumph even among those who have received it, amounts merely to this: that it does not correspond with our *a priori* notions; that it is unlike what we should have expected; not a very formidable objection, for is there anything which is like our expectations, which does correspond with our *a priori* notions of it? The issue may very probably be confused for many minds by some figment of the rights of man borrowed from the political theories of the day. But it must be absolutely clear to any one who will look at the matter in the light of reason that man has in strictness no rights against God. The Divine Ruler and Judge of men makes us to differ from one another in gifts of grace as of nature or of fortune; to one He gives ten talents, to another five, to another one. Why not? Is it not lawful for Him to do what He will with His own? The Apostolic question is unanswerable: "Who art thou that repliest against God?" The philosophy of the *Essay on Man* is not very profound; but Pope seems to me to make "a very palpable hit" when he says:—

> Go, wiser thou ! and, in thy scale of sense,
> Weigh thy Opinion against Providence ;
> Call imperfection what thou fanciest such,
> Say, here he gives too little, there too much ;
> Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,
> Re-judge his justice, be the God of God.

If Christianity is what Christianity professes to be, "good tidings of great joy," transfiguring this brief and troubled life by the infinite value given to it as the school of spiritual discipline, the training-place for eternity, why should the fact that this religion is offered to me and not to others be any kind of reason for my declining it?

PYTHIAS. You talk of an immortal hope. But surely the outlook which the theologians exhibit to the vast majority of mankind is rather an immortal dread. I was reading the other day in one of the profoundest and most eloquent of your writers: "It is one opinion entertained among divines and holy men, that the number of Catholics that are to be saved will on the whole be small;" and I suppose Catholics would be held by their divines and holy men to have a better chance than the rest of the world. But what a vision does this opinion raise in the mind; the vision of a Being who could deliberately and of His own free will call into existence myriads of creatures with infinite capacities for suffering, foreknowing, or rather knowing, —"in Him is no before,"—that an eternity of ineffable misery lay before them! People are better than their creed, or the servants of such a Being

would be absolutely inhuman. They may thank themselves, however, if such a representation of God drives men into negation of Him. But what makes the matter worse is, that, as I am firmly persuaded, the good men—I know they are sometimes very good men—who put it forward do not in their heart of hearts believe it. How could they eat or drink, or sleep, if they did? The horror of the thought would haunt them day and night, and in no long time drive them mad. Indeed, I think it may be safely affirmed that the only real believers in this Stygian Gospel are those who lose their reason by it, for that is its natural and logical result.

DAMON. Very little is of faith with Catholics upon this tremendous subject. This is of faith, that human life is a time of probation; that the choice which every creature endowed with free will has to make, while in this world, is "brief, and yet endless," and that those who deliberately reject God by their own act shut themselves out from the Beatific Vision. What do the researches of the physicists bring out more startlingly than the inexorableness of the "laws of Nature," as they speak? All things are double one against another: the things that are seen against the things that are not seen. Law reigns everywhere. It is as irreversible in the spiritual order as in the phenomenal world. Thus Gotama, whose doctrine, that a man's doing is his true self, embodies a great truth, teaches in the Pâli *Dhammapada* that "evil deeds *must* bear

bitter fruits,"—there is no help for it: that though "an evil deed, like newly-drawn milk, does not all at once turn sour, yet, smouldering like fire covered by ashes, it follows the fool" into the unseen world: that, if "a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him, as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage," a most significant comparison. As you will remember we used to read in Hegel, punishment is not something arbitrary; it is "the other half of crime." It is not primarily nor necessarily remedial, but vindictive—a stern truth, which the jargon of so-called philanthropists has done much to obscure for the present age. Every great religion, every profound thinker, has realized as vividly as Christianity itself the tremendous, the far-reaching nature of sin. You remember the passage in Plato—it is in the *Phædo*—where he says that the wicked would be too well off if their evil deeds came to an end with death, and that other passage at the end of the *Republic*, where one spirit asks another, "Where is 'Ardiæus the Great'?"—the tyrant who a thousand years before had desolated one of the cities of Pamphylia—and is answered, "He has not come forth from hell; he is not likely to come forth." It is a most striking thing that the two founders of religions, who, as you will allow, have been most full of pity for men, Jesus the Messiah, and Gotama the Buddha, have presented the most terrible pictures of the consequences, in another existence, of moral

evil in this. Think of Dives, the heartless glutton, asking in vain for a drop of water to cool his tongue in the unquenchable flame. Think of the monk Kokâliya, of whom we read in the *Sutta Nipâta*, condemned, for speaking evil of the brethren, to the Paduma hell, where the wicked are beaten with iron hammers, and boiled in iron pots in a mixture of blood and matter, and fed on food resembling red-hot balls of iron, and plunged into the accursed river Vetaranî, difficult to cross, and flowing with streams of sharp-edged razors, and where their torments last 512,000,000,000 times as long as it would take to clear away a large load of tiny sesamum seed, at the rate of one seed in a hundred years. If, as Catholics believe, God is the final end of man—to love Him above all things, our friend in Him, our enemy for him, our great good—and if this life is a time of probation, what can we reasonably conjecture as to the destiny which any one shapes for himself who deliberately turns away from that final end, and rejects that great good, who takes side with His enemies, and says, "Evil, be thou my good"? "L'enfer," says Bossuet, "c'est le péché même, l'enfer c'est d'être eloigné de Dieu." He whose lips were full of grace, speaks of eternal sin—"reus æterni delicti,"[1]—a pregnant expression indeed. There is a fine passage in the *Qur'ân*, depicting with much boldness the "Dies

[1] *ἁμαρτήματος*, not *κρίσεως*, is unquestionably the true reading of the passage, St. Mark iii. 29.

Iræ," as the Muslim prophet conceived of it, "when the heavens shall be rent asunder, and the stars shall be dispersed, and the seas shall be mingled, and the sepulchres shall be overthrown, and every soul shall know what it hath done and left undone." On that great and exceeding bitter day, in each man's hand shall be put the book of his deeds; his account exactly stated; himself called to witness that "the Lord will not deal unjustly with any one." The vision which you have conjured up, I of course put aside as the mere phantasm of a disordered imagination. God is infinitely loving, as well as infinitely just. And of this we may be confident—it seems to me blasphemous to doubt it —that the eventual condition of every soul will be such as is best for that soul; the best that is possible for it, as being what it is, what it has made itself to be. This is the "larger hope," which we not only may faintly trust, but should assuredly believe: the one ray of celestial light in this great darkness. "Thou lovest all the things that are, and abhorrest nothing that Thou hast made. Thou sparest all, for they are Thine, O Lord, Thou Lover of Souls!"

PYTHIAS. Well, it is satisfactory to learn "que le bon Dieu n'est pas si noir qu'on le croit." But I have a train to Richmond to catch, and time is going on. Let me go on too, and touch upon another point, I mean the difficulties which history presents to the claims of Christianity, and especially of Catholicism. Thus we can trace the develop-

ment of the Theistic idea among the Hebrews, as an historical fact, from the anthropomorphic national or tribal Deity, Yahveh, to the Eternal God proclaimed by Jeremiah and the later prophets. We can trace the growth of the Trinitarian idea from the dim semi-Platonic notion in which it first appears, until it receives its full embodiment at Nicæa. We know when a belief in purgatory came in: we can follow step by step the growth of the cultus of the Virgin. But even when apparently fixed, stereotyped, so to speak, in symbols and formulas, religious ideas really change. Modern Catholicism would be, to no small extent, strange to a mediaeval Catholic. Nineteenth-century Protestantism would certainly considerably astonish Luther or Calvin. It is not difficult to imagine what effect either would produce on St. Peter or St. Paul. *πάντα ῥεῖ.*

DAMON. And why not? To live is to change. I am not in the least concerned to deny that the earliest Hebrew conceptions of Deity were anthropomorphic. It was natural that they should be so. The Lord God, walking in the garden in the cool of the day, or speaking to Moses face to face, as a man is wont to speak to his friend, these and the like notions belong to a primitive state of religious belief. Here as elsewhere—

> The thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns.

Ideas are like seeds; they germinate in the human mind, they assimilate nutriment from all sides, they

grow and are transformed in the growing; and all this takes place by a divinely ordained law, analogous to that which rules in the vegetable world, as might indeed have been expected, since both are the expression of the same Supreme Mind. It is perfectly true that the word Trinity did not come into use until the second century; it is equally true that the conception which that word expresses may be traced back to Apostolic times and long before. The doctrine of purgatory, as we find it in Pope St. Gregory's day, was, in some sort, new. But the notion of a place of purification, where the imperfect, "saved, yet so as by fire," abide—

> In prison for the debt unpaid,
> Of sins committed here,

until its uttermost farthing is discharged, and the Divine Law is satisfied, is as old as Christianity, and far older. And so of other doctrines of the faith. There is really nothing more to be said on this subject than has been said by Cardinal Newman in his *Essay on Development.*

PYTHIAS. So that when

> John P.
> Robinson, he
> Sez they didn't know everything down in Judee,

he speaks wiser than he is aware of.

DAMON. Yes. The theological statement of Mr. Robinson's proposition, if you care to have it in the words of Cardinal Laurence Brancata, is "Multæ veritates, initio ecclesiæ, aut obscuræ erant, aut

penitus ignotæ." I have no objection to take the American humorist and even the author of *Nana*, whom you quoted just now, as exponents, in some sort, of their age. But, after all, we must remember that, as M. Renan admirably says, "seriousness is the first essential of morality and religion."

PYTHIAS. "Ridentem dicere verum, quid vetat?" But M. Renan: by all means let us go on to him if you like, the more especially as I have been lately reading again his *Souvenirs d'Enfance et de Jeunesse* —his *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, as we may consider it. How singularly interesting it is!

DAMON. Yes, indeed. It is a fascinating book. Who can resist the winning grace of M. Renan's literary workmanship? Still, when I come to weigh what he tells us in it I am in doubt whether kindly feeling for the writer, or astonishment at the grounds upon which he gave up his religion, is the predominant thought in my mind.

PYTHIAS. I am glad to hear a good word from you for Renan. It is not often that I hear one from a Catholic.

DAMON. It is not my business to judge him. "Unusquisque nostrum pro se rationem reddet Deo." "If he seek Truth, is he not our brother, and to be pitied? If he do not seek Truth, is he not still our brother, and to be pitied still more?" But I do not envy the man who can read untouched that chapter in his life which he has thought fit to unfold to the world.

PYTHIAS. Well, but I should like to hear what you have to say about the grounds on which Renan gave up Catholicism and Christianity.

DAMON. The rocks upon which he made shipwreck of faith were, as it would seem, the Supernatural and the Sacred Scriptures of Christianity. As regards the first, he quotes, I remember, Littré's well-known dictum, "Quelque recherche qu'on ait faite, jamais un miracle ne c'est pas produit là où il pouvait être observé et constaté," a text upon which, by the way, he has enlarged in his *Vie de Jésus*. Now it is perfectly true that no case is upon record of a saint offering to work a miracle for a wager, or to satisfy a jury of professors of physics. In the law of the Divine Government of the world, neither curiosity nor disbelief is the condition of these phenomena of the order of grace. You remember the plea urged in the Gospel on behalf of the Centurion, whose son Christ was besought to heal: that he was worthy for whom He should do this. Such congruity must ordinarily precede the exercise of miraculous power. Can it be said to exist in the case of our prophets of materialism? Are they not rather like those who sought of Him a sign tempting Him? The only sign which was to be given to those Galilean unbelievers is given to their representatives in the nineteenth century. The successors of the Apostles, like the Apostles themselves, are witnesses of Christ's Resurrection. That is the miracle upon

which Christianity rests;—its fundamental basis, so that, as St. Paul says, "If Christ be not risen, your faith is vain, and our preaching also is vain." For eighteen centuries a belief in the Resurrection has been in this world, a belief for which its earliest propagators in the old Roman Empire and its latest votaries in the Corea have gladly laid down their lives; a belief that has exerted a moral influence in the world, which is one of the clearest facts of history. How are we to account for the origin of that belief? Every effect must have an adequate cause. The hypothesis of the truth of the Resurrection sufficiently explains the fact of belief in it. Is any other hypothesis sufficient?

PYTHIAS. Well, you know there is the resuscitation hypothesis—that the supposed death was not real but apparent, a death-like swoon, from which, after the descent from the Cross, Jesus recovered in the cool cavern, covered as He was with healing unguents and aromatic herbs: or if that theory does not commend itself to you—and to be sure Strauss has himself pretty completely demolished it in his *New Life of Jesus*—there is the visionary hypothesis, a bran-new speculation of his own.

DAMON. Well, but this visionary hypothesis—"that the faith in Jesus as the Messiah, which by His violent death had received an apparently fatal shock, was restored subjectively by the instrumentality of the mind, the power of imagination, and men's own excitement"—is it worth arguing?

Let us look at it from the point of view of our own profession. Could we reasonably expect a jury to accept such an explanation of the intense unwavering conviction which animated the early preachers of Christianity? It appears to me that the fact of the Resurrection of Christ alone accounts adequately for the belief in it by which those who had forsaken Him and fled in the hour of His Passion, were out of weakness made so strong,—that belief upon which the vast fabric of Christianity has ever since rested, and still rests.

PYTHIAS. Your point, then, is, that those to whom this argument is not convincing, would not be persuaded although one rose from the dead in their own presence.

DAMON. I am sure they would not, they would have a resuscitation hypothesis, or a visionary hypothesis, ready for the occasion. For, consciously or not, they are under the influence of a first principle which blocks belief; a first principle, which is not a scientific truth at all, but merely a figment of the imagination disguised as a universal intellectual proposition. You remember how, in the Gospel, the Divine Master upbraided the eleven with their hardness of heart because they believed not those who had seen Him after He was risen. No doubt they thought it hardness of head. For the rest it seems to me that all history—not merely the history of Judaism and Christianity—teems with the supernatural. I mean that we have on

record in the annals of the world a vast multitude of occurrences, as well attested as any facts can be, which are not referable to that sequence of phenomena called the laws of Nature: nay, I go further than that: I agree with Schopenhauer, that we are all constantly crossing the line between Nature and the Supernatural.[1] So I think: and if I at all know myself I do not believe that I am in the least under the influence of what M. Renan calls "a taste for the irrational."

PYTHIAS. It appears to you, then, that M. Renan's proposition about the supernatural rests upon an assumption opposed to facts. Well, you have the courage of your opinions, at all events. But what about his critical difficulties? You have considered them?

DAMON. Who that is even moderately well acquainted with modern literature can have helped considering them? But I see you have a paper in your hand.

PYTHIAS. It is an extract that I made from Renan's book. Listen. Let us send upstairs for it. Meanwhile I will give to you this passage in English:—

It is no longer possible to maintain that the second part of Isaias was written by Isaias. The Book of Daniel, which all ortho-

[1] See his exceedingly curious essay, *Versuch über das Geistersehen und was damit Zusammenhängt*, in the first volume of *Parerga und Paralipomena*. Schopenhauer's conception of the Supernatural, as it is hardly necessary to add, differs very widely from the Christian conception.

doxy attributes to the time of the Captivity, is an apocryphal writing, composed a hundred and sixty-nine or a hundred and seventy years before Jesus Christ. The Book of Judith is an historical impossibility. The ascription of the Pentateuch to Moses is unsustainable, and to deny that many parts of Genesis have a mythical character is to oblige oneself to explain as real such stories as those of the earthly Paradise, the apple, and the ark of Noah. But you are no Catholic if you deviate upon any one of these points from the traditional thesis. Orthodoxy obliges you to believe that the books are the work of those to whom the titles attribute them. The most mitigated Catholic doctrines upon inspiration do not allow of the admission, in the sacred books, of any marked error, any contradiction, even in things that concern neither faith nor morals.

What do you make of that?

DAMON. I remember the passage. I am well aware that the Biblical exegesis taught by Catholic professors has been extremely little, if at all, affected by modern criticism. But that "traditional thesis," as M. Renan well calls it, rests upon no decree of Pope or Council; nor is it true that orthodoxy obliges you or me to believe, as a condition of Catholic communion, that all our sacred books were written by those whose names they bear, or at the dates commonly attributed to them, or that their human authors possessed, in all cases, accurate conceptions of the matters, whether of physical science or of secular history, upon which they had to touch. For myself, I confess that such questions possess little interest for me. I regard the Bible as the creation of the Church; and, whatever the antiquity or the origin of the various documents which it contains, I receive them on her

word, just as St. Augustine did; and, like him, I say that I should not receive them at all unless her authority moved me to do so. Of course, the formal doctrine of the Church is one thing; the current teaching at the Sorbonne, at Louvain, or even at Rome, is another.

PYTHIAS. Those worthy professors at St. Sulpice, as described by M. Renan, seem to me to resemble their friends the Bourbons: they had learnt nothing and they had forgotten nothing, where there was so much to learn and to forget. Their method of dealing with the higher criticism of Germany reminds me of Mrs. Partington's encountering the Atlantic ocean with her broom.

DAMON. I suppose they followed the old Gallican traditions so potent in France in the last century. Bayle, as I remember, tells us that one of the charges of the Jansenists against the Society of Jesus was, "Vouloir de reconnoître dans l'Écriture quelque chose de foiblesse et de l'esprit naturel de l'homme." As a matter of fact, there is nothing in the formal teaching of the Church to prevent any Catholic from holding that in matters not affecting faith or morals the writers of our sacred books had no exceptional lights, no special immunity from error; nor is there a single definition from Pope or Council, so far as I can learn, as to the date or authorship of any of the writings included in the canon of Scripture. But that "higher criticism," which was such a bugbear to M. Renan, what is its

real outcome? A great genius—lost, as Heine thought, to Catholicity mainly by the fault of Catholics—turning his piercing gaze upon it forty years ago, judged it to be little more than a mass of nebulosity and contradiction, and certainly it has not become more clear or consistent since. "At first sight," says Edgar Quinet—for it is he whom I am citing—"everything seems to be changed by its discoveries: but when you recover from the shock and really look into it"—as he had done most thoroughly—"you find such a medley of visionary conjecture and reckless theorizing that you despair of founding anything thereupon."[1] God forbid that I should say one word in disparagement of the laborious erudition of Germany; but really the average Teutonic Biblical critic, floundering heavily amid the most difficult and delicate problems of style and authorship and ethos, seems to me like a bull in a china-shop, good only for indiscriminate destruction. I should deeply resent such irreverent treatment of the *Dhammapada* or the *Qur'ân* as the most august documents of Christianity experience at his hands. I am no Hebrew scholar myself, but I happen to have had quite recently a letter from a learned friend well skilled in that language, which contains some observations very much to my present point. "I recognize," he writes, "the different shades in

[1] See this very striking passage at the beginning of the fifth book of *Le Génie des Religions.*

Isaias and other Hebrew writers, when Gesenius or Ewald guides me to them; and enjoy them, as I do the contrast of Rafael's earlier and later manners; but I cannot draw the inferences of these critics. What I mean is, not that they perceive variety where there is none; but that they are too stiff, too pedantic, to remember that one man uses many styles according to his mood and subject-matter. Could we suppose that *King Lear* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* were by the same hand, did we not know it? I take an instance at random; but compare again Schiller's *Räuber* with his *Don Carlos*, or Browning's *Paracelsus* with his *Hohenstiel Schwangau*. Moreover, I think our knowledge of Hebrew far too scanty (and it must ever remain so) to allow of our judging which is the pure dialect at a given era, which the provincial. I do not myself undertake to say whether Solomon was or was not the author of Ecclesiastes. What I do say is, that it is not critical soundness, but an eccentric liking for the novel and unexpected, that leads men to deny his authorship upon the strength of a few Aramaic words. What do we know of Aramaic or its condition in Solomon's time?"

PYTHIAS. Now let us come to the point, which I am sure you do not wish to shirk. Suppose any Catholic priest should teach his people what, as I suppose, few competent critics doubt, that the book of Judith is unhistorical, that the same must be said of the account of Alexander's death in Maccabees,

that the book bearing the name of Daniel was written by some one else in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, and that the Pentateuch is largely the work of Ezra,—what would probably happen to that bold ecclesiastic?

DAMON. It would be little short of a miracle if he escaped suspension *a sacris*, and, in my judgment, apart from all question as to the truth of his opinions, he would richly deserve to be suspended. His business is to watch for men's souls, not to unsettle their faith. Men have no need of masters to doubt; and, if they had, it is not to the priesthood that they should go for them. The Catholic Church, while in a true sense, nay, the truest, Liberal—for she is the source of the liberties of the modern world, just as Jacobinism is the source of its most odious tyranny—is in another and as true a sense Conservative. What has a good plain Christian—and such is the average unit to whom our clergy have to minister—to do with the "higher criticism" of Germany and its speculations? He is absolutely incapable of appreciating even the first elements of the questions with which the Teutonic savants deal. And the best counsel his spiritual adviser can give him is that of Dogberry: "For such kind of men the less you meddle or make with them, why the more for your honesty." It is one of the most grievous misfortunes of the age that the cobbler will not stick to his last, but will imagine himself able to judge of all things in heaven and

earth by the aid of Mr. Bradlaugh and Mr. Bradlaugh's "philosophy." As regards the Catholic Church, it would be monstrously out of keeping with her august character that she should be tossed about with every wind of doctrine which may chance to blow from that cave of Æolus which we call the "higher criticism" of Germany. She will wait until that "higher criticism" has really established something certain, and then will consider how far the "traditional thesis" taught in her schools should be modified in consequence. And here surely she acts but in accordance with that larger spirit, that *mens divinior*, which is in her. True is Butler's saying, "We are impatient and for hastening things." She can wait, as the Oracle of Him who is "Patiens quia Æternus," and in whose eternity she shares.

PYTHIAS. Well, but you admit that the Church might impose upon you the obligation of accepting literally the Hebrew story of the Six Days' Creation, of Eve and the Apple and the Serpent, of the Tower of Babel, and of Noah and his Ark.

DAMON. No Catholic doubts that she might. But the Church might do ten thousand things which she has never done and never will do. I submit, in advance, with entire submission of the will and of the intellect, to her dogmatic teaching. But in proportion to the strength of my belief that any proposition is true—for example, that the first chapter of Genesis is an economical representation

of something beyond us—is the strength of my conviction that she will never call upon me to believe otherwise.

PYTHIAS. Ah, here is Renan's book. He complains, I observe, of those who represent Christianity as imposing hardly any sacrifice on reason, and who attract to it by the aid of that artifice people who do not know to what, *au fond*, they commit themselves. And, again, he attributes "disloyalty" and "intellectual dishonesty of the worst kind" to those who do not admit the correctness of his representation of Catholic doctrine. "C'est l'illusion des Catholiques laïques qui se disent libéraux," he adds.

DAMON. Men like Montalembert and Ozanam, Biot and François Lenormant, require no vindication from the charges of disloyalty and intellectual dishonesty. Their names are a sufficient vindication. To speak frankly, I think much allowance must be made for M. Renan. What George Sand said of Sainte-Beuve may, with even more reason, be said of him: "Il a été toujours tourmenté des choses divines": hence he labours under a perpetual need to justify himself. Most pathetic to me are his references in the very book of which we have been talking to the Christian portion of his life. Of his "all but adoring love" for the person and character of Jesus Christ I cannot doubt. How different is his spirit from that of those obscene blasphemers, those fraudulent traders in the vilest passions of the populace, calling themselves *libres penseurs*

—what a prostitution of the sacred names of liberty and thought!—with whom he is generally associated and whose insults he has occasionally to undergo, as at M. Littré's funeral, because he is not altogether such an one as themselves. To follow truth wherever it might lead, I can well believe, was the high thought which led M. Renan, in entering upon life, to renounce the ecclesiastical career, and to devote himself to "free research." But how terrible the haunting suspicion that, after all, he may have been following error!

> How can we guard our unbelief?
> Just when we're surest there's a sunset touch.

One way to guard it is to picture the religion we have abandoned as irrational, as dogmatically propounding demonstrated error, or doctrines plainly hostile to the rights and liberties of mankind. This is an "artifice," if I must use M. Renan's own word, which he has largely practised. Thus, in 1848, in a famous essay entitled *Du Libéralisme Clerical*, he endeavoured to fasten upon the Catholic Church the absolutist political theories of Bossuet, theories which are so far from having received her sanction that they are quite irreconcilable with the teaching of her most authoritative theologians—St. Thomas Aquinas and Suarez, for example—and which would, I venture to say, be as promptly repudiated by Leo XIII. as by M. Renan himself. Identify the Catholic Church with absolutism in politics, with obscurantism in criticism, and with

falsehood in history, and, no doubt, you may make out an excellent case for abandoning her. There is a curious passage in M. Renan's book where he tells us that his mother, although very intelligent, was not instructed enough to understand his throwing off his religion, because he was of opinion that certain Messianic explanations of the Psalms are untenable; and that Gesenius, in his commentary upon Isaias, "is right in almost all points against the orthodox." We may safely say that M. Renan's mother was a better-instructed Catholic than M. Renan. For the rest it is absolutely certain that the Church, in her formal teaching, makes no claims for the Sacred Scriptures which are, or ever can be, at variance with the ascertained facts, whether of physical science, or of exegetical criticism, or of history. I say the "ascertained facts," for most of our physicists, critics, and historians—but especially the physicists—seem to me lamentably deficient in the faculty which can distinguish a hypothesis, plausible, or even improbable, from proved conclusions. It would be a great benefit to the world if these gentlemen were compelled to pass an examination in the law of evidence before they were allowed to write.

PYTHIAS. I remember Virchow protesting, not long ago, against "the arbitrariness of personal speculation which is now rampant in the several branches of physical science." So you are not afraid of—

> Cosmogony,
> Geology, Ethnology, what not?
> Greek endings, with the little passing-bell
> That signifies some faith's about to die.

DAMON. Any faith — viewed objectively — to which the facts of any science can be fatal, must die, that is certain; the best we can hope for it is that it may continue to do good service until something better is provided to take its place. I say "viewed objectively," for, of course, in individual minds the purest faith is found side by side with a vast amount of intellectual error. Hence superstitions, which attach mainly in Protestant countries to texts, in Catholic to images and relics. The mischief is when it is sought to erect the devout follies of the ignorant into a rule of faith for the more enlightened.

PYTHIAS. But false miracles, false relics—what do you make of them?

DAMON. The false attends the true as the shadow the substance. Has there been no charlatanry in physiology, in physics? Why, then, be astonished if you find it in the far wider sphere of the supernatural?

PYTHIAS. I met at dinner the other day an excellent and very accomplished dignitary of your communion, who told me a story which greatly took my fancy. Not long ago, in Dublin, an old Irishwoman went to her confessor in much excitement, averring that she had seen St. Peter. "Had

you had anything to drink, Biddy?" asked the priest, who knew his penitent. Biddy owned to a little drop of whisky. "Well, Biddy," said the prudent divine, "to-morrow take two little drops, and sure you'll see St. Paul as well."

DAMON. Good. That ecclesiastic evidently possessed the gift of discerning of spirits.

PYTHIAS. At all events, a promising "apparition" was nipped in the bud. But you will hardly deny that in many Catholic countries the popular worship is often nothing but coarse idolatry.

DAMON. I most certainly do deny it. I am sure that when most corrupt it is always more than coarse idolatry; nay, that in the proper sense of the word there is no idolatry at all in it. No Catholic, however ill-instructed, would dream of offering the supreme worship of the altar to any object but God.

PYTHIAS. But the superstitions of Catholic countries, my dear friend, "gross as a mountain, open, palpable!"

DAMON. Barth, in his admirable book on the *Religions of India*, speaking of the impure beliefs of certain Hindoo sects, says: "It would be to display great ignorance of the immense resources of the religious sentiment to presume that the effect of them must have been necessarily and universally demoralising"; and he adds very justly: "The common people have a certain safeguard in the very grossness of their superstition, and among the

higher ranks there are many souls that are at once mystically inclined and pure-hearted, who know how to extract the honey of pure love from a strange mixture of obscenities." This applies more strongly to the superstitions found in Catholic countries, superstitions which, at the worst, are only childish or grotesque, the ideal cast by the popular fancy into the form in which the simple can receive it. We must always remember that a thing may be literally false and ideally true. A legend may be doubtful: the faith and devotion which it excites in religious but uncritical minds are very real. St. Augustine well says—he is speaking of textmongering, but the same principle applies — "isto humillimo genere verborum, tanquam materno sinu, eorum gestatur infirmitas, salubriter ædificatur fides."

PYTHIAS. Of course you do not defend pious frauds?

DAMON. By no means. I am talking of popular beliefs about the supernatural which we find existing, which we do not know to be true, and may shrewdly suspect to be false, and which you call superstition. Well, I say, with Cardinal Newman, that "taking human nature as it is,"—I do not deal in *individua vaga*,—"superstition is the sure companion of faith, when vivid and earnest," and that "we may surely concede a little superstition, as not the worst of evils, if it be the price of making sure of faith."

PYTHIAS. So that, in fact, you have two religions in the Catholic Church: philosophy, science, transcendentalism for the educated; winking Virgins and mythology for the ignorant.

DAMON. No. The message of the Church is one and the same to all, but naturally it is differently apprehended by different minds. And the office of the Church is, like that of the Apostle,—to become all things to all men that she may save all. There are in the Catholic Church, as St. Augustine speaks, *spiritales* and *carnales*, those who possess what he calls the serene intelligence of truth, and those—the vast majority—who are illuminated by the simple faith of little ones. But the most feeble and confused intellectual intelligence is consistent with the highest sanctity. Things hidden from the wise and prudent are often revealed unto babes. It was a fine saying of one of the early lights of the Franciscan order: "A poor ignorant old woman who loves Jesus may be greater than Brother Bonaventura." The substance of the message of the Catholic Church is the supremacy of goodness. Not what a man knows but what he loves is the test, according to the great maxim of St. Augustine: "Boni aut mali mores sunt boni aut mali amores." Pardon my quoting St. Augustine so much. But he, more than any one else, has been my teacher for years past, completing and perfecting what Plato began.

PYTHIAS. "Quidquid dicitur in Platone vivit in

Augustino"—is not that the dictum? I confess St. Augustine is but a name to me. What you say will lead me to make him something more. But let us return to our point. You maintain that the Catholic Church does not proscribe, condemn, or reject any truth of any kind which the modern mind has brought to light?

DAMON. To do so would be to stultify herself as the representative of the God of Truth. "Truth of what kind soever is by no kind of truth gainsaid." I do not know who has spoken upon this matter better, or more loyally and honestly (*pace* M. Renan), than that illustrious savant and devout Catholic, the late François Lenormant, in words which I am glad to retain in my memory:—"Je suis un Chrétien et maintenant que ma croyance peut être un titre à l'outrage, je tiens plus que jamais à la proclamer hautement. En même temps je suis un savant, et comme tel je ne connais pas une science Chrétienne et une science libre-penseuse: je n'admets qu'une seule science qui n'a pas besoin d'autre épithète que son nom même, qui laisse de coté, comme étrangères à son domaine, les questions théologiques, et dont tous chercheurs de bonne foi sont au même titre les serviteurs, quelques soient leurs convictions religieuses."[1]

PYTHIAS. There is a ring of honesty about that which presents a curious contrast to what we read

[1] *Les Origines de l'Histoire d'après la Bible*, par François Lenormant, Pref. p. 9.

in many of your Catholic journals. I remember Sainte-Beuve complaining, and as I thought with reason, of M. Louis Veuillot's complete disregard of truth in respect of him: "son absence complète de verité à mon égard." It seems to me that whether a thing is true, is not by any means the first consideration with your controversialists. They would do well to learn and inwardly digest the Hindu proverb: "A fact is not altered by a hundred texts."

DAMON. I admit that there are many Catholic writers in France and elsewhere, earnest and forcible writers, who display a lamentable unwillingness to look facts in the face; who seem to be penetrated with the conviction that Catholicity is a tottering structure which a too bold word will overthrow. The violence of these singular defenders of the faith is only equalled by their pusillanimity. But remember that Catholicity has come into this nineteenth century out of the unspeakable degradation of the eighteenth, the most melancholy century, to me, in the annals of the Church. What a picture it offers! Religion sunk into formalism; the devout few scandalized at liberty and afraid of philosophy; the political and metaphysical speculations of the Middle Ages, so frank and so hardy, cast aside. And no wonder: for the doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas, whether on the authority of reason or on popular rights, was entirely out of harmony with the spirit which

then prevailed, and which has not, as yet, by any means died out. There are few more cheering signs of the times than the revival of the Thomistic philosophy which we have seen of late years, and which the great Pontiff who now rules the Church has done so much to encourage. Singularly strong are his words on this subject in his well-known Encyclical *Æterni Patris*. He speaks of his "eager desire to reinstate and to propagate far and wide the golden wisdom of Aquinas, for the safety and glory of the Catholic faith, the advantage of society, and the advancement of all the sciences." He exhorts all the bishops with the greatest earnestness (*quam enixe*) to labour for this end; and vehemently (*vehementer*) praises those who have anticipated his wish.

PYTHIAS. Well, I suppose (but you won't let me say so) that the infallible Church, like everything else, is moving with the times. We have travelled far since the days when the Inquisition, the *santissimo tribunale* of Pius V., was a real power. The other day I was at a public *déjeûner*, where there were two or three Wesleyan and Baptist ministers, a Unitarian divine, an Anglican dean, and a Quaker. And then—wonder of wonders!—to them entered a Catholic bishop, prepared

> To breakfast with them, ere they went below.

The good man spoke very excellent things of liberty of conscience, much to the delight of his brethren of various denominations: and I thought,

how are the mighty fallen! Here is a prelate of the ... eating the muffin of peace wi... predecessors three centuries ag... have burnt alive.

... old-world legislation for preserving re... strikes us as a monstrous phe... We marvel at a man like Sir Thomas M... heretic to death, or at Calvin employing against Servetus the unanswerable argument of the stake. We forget that the political theory of those days, with which public opinion was wholly in harmony, set a supreme value upon religious unity, and unhesitatingly employed the severest form of coercion in order to preserve it. You will find this old-world view clearly stated in Jeremy Taylor's *Life of Christ*. "God," he says, "reigns over Christendom just as he did over the Jews. When it happens that a kingdom is converted to Christianity, the religion of the nation is termed Christian, and the law of the nation made a part of the religion. There is no change of government but that Christ is made king and the temporal power is His substitute. But if we reject Christ from reigning over us, and say, like the people in the Gospel, 'Nolumus hunc regnare,' then God has armed the temporal power with a sword to cut us off." This theory—whatever we may think of it—accepted in an age of religious unity, is quite inapplicable to an age of religious disunity.

PYTHIAS. It is curious that Jeremy Taylor

should have said that. Hallam talks of him as the writer who sapped the foundations of dogmatism, and prepared for "the public toleration of differences in religion" by freeing men's minds from bigotry. But possibly his more liberal views were expressed when the Cromwellian sword was threatening to cut *him* off. Your doctrine of exclusive salvation, however! Surely you must have found that difficult of digestion? Not, indeed, that all your brethren in the faith do. A friend of mine the other day was riding home from hunting with a Catholic squire, a very good sort, better than his creed, my friend thought. They fell to talking of religious matters, and my friend said, frankly: "What I can't stand about your Church is its intolerance. I suppose I am right in thinking that it gives a fellow like myself no chance at all, but teaches that I must be damned." The squire remained for a few minutes in pensive silence, and then said, "I am not much of a scholar, and don't exactly know whether the Church teaches that; but, if you ask me my own private opinion, I should say there could not be a doubt of it." My friend changed the topic of conversation.

DAMON. A straight answer, at all events, to your friend's question. But, as to your own. "Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus" is, of course, a theological maxim; but theologians draw a distinction between the body of the Church and the soul of the Church. Those who recognise the Catholic Church for what

she is, a divine, authoritative fact, are naturally bound to submit to her. It is at their peril if they do not. But if, being in good faith, and desiring truth, through default of birth or education, or through prejudices which render her fatally odious, they fail thus to see her, they certainly cannot in conscience join themselves to her until, if ever, they have clearer light. The soul of the Church is the invisible fellowship of all who have faith, at least implicit faith. There are many who share in her profession, in her worship, in the action of her government, and who belong only to her body. Thus, the Catholic doctrine on this matter of exclusive salvation comes substantially to Bishop Wilson's maxim: Never go against the best light you have, and take care that your light be not darkness; which is surely reasonable enough.

PYTHIAS. You know of Voltaire's objection—and it has always struck me as a very forcible one—that it is incredible that God should, for so many ages, have abandoned and proscribed all the rest of the world to make Himself King of "the miserable and disgusting little tribe of the Jews."

DAMON. Voltaire had, as we know, excellent reasons of his own for hating the people of the Hebrews, whose wonderful history and sublime literature, by the way, he, with all his *esprit*, was quite incapable of appreciating; but he had no reason at all for alleging that Catholics suppose the Great Father in Heaven ever to have abandoned any

of His children upon earth. Nowhere, and at no time, has He left Himself without witness in the dispensations of Providence, in the monitions of conscience, in the ethical notions which we may trace even in the most degraded varieties of our race, and which, independent of the philosophical systems or the religious disciplines in vogue, are among the prime facts of human nature; a true "independent morality," and the only one. Christianity and Catholicity are in one sense exclusive; but, in another, and in an equally true sense, they are inclusive. All truth is from Him who is the Truth, in whatever religious system it is embodied, and with whatever error it is intermingled. Clement of Alexandria speaks of "the dispensation of Paganism," and the greatest Catholic writers have delighted in regarding imperfect forms of religion as anticipations or shadows of Christianity. There is a fine saying of Sainte-Beuve, in his earlier and better days: "Le Christianisme n'est que la rectitude de toutes les croyances universelles, l'axe central qui fixe le sens de toutes le déviations."

PYTHIAS. I must go, or I shall lose my train. Your arguments have interested me very much; and of this I am sure, that they would prove convincing to any one who was previously of your opinion.

DAMON. Nay, but we have not been arguing. I have simply been telling you how the ordinary objections to Christianity, and especially to that form of Christianity which I have embraced, lost

their cogency when I really came to look into them. Arguments, by themselves, are not very operative in religious inquiry. Who ever embraced a creed as the conclusion of a syllogism?

PYTHIAS. I suppose there is a good deal of truth in Squire Ralpho's account of logic:—

> This pagan, heathenish invention
> Is good for nothing but contention.

DAMON. Fichte says, "We do not will according to our reason; we reason according to our will"; and there is much truth in that saying, at all events. There are arguments which admit of no reply, and which bring no conviction. There are arguments, not by themselves conclusive, which produce so firm a certitude that men would gladly die for it. But no. This firm certitude is not merely the result of an intellectual process. Something else comes in.

PYTHIAS. And that something else is ——

DAMON. The principle of faith.

PYTHIAS. O my prophetic soul! I was just then thinking of Montaigne's saying: "Il n'est rien creu si fermement que ce qu'on sçait le moins, ny gens si assurez que ceux qui nous content des fables."

DAMON. There are two sides to everything, and that is the reverse side of a great verity. The truths you hold most firmly are precisely "the truths that never can be proved." Plato said: "I know nothing more clear and certain than this—that I must be as good and noble as it is possible for me to be." This clearness and certainty were

not the result of ratiocination. I cannot prove to you the beauty of a sunset, or the sacredness of sorrow, or the nobleness of "Regulus and of the Scauri, and of Paulus, prodigal of his great soul when the Punic enemy triumphed." Still you do not doubt these things. There is nothing you believe more firmly. But you cannot demonstrate them.

PYTHIAS. No.

DAMON. No. Go on from Montaigne to Pascal. "Le cœur a ses raisons que la raison ne connait point." Surely that is true. "Est-ce par raison que vous aimez?" It is, as he elsewhere says, from the heart that Divine verities enter into the mind; not from the mind that they enter the heart. Christianity is not proved like a mathematical problem. Its truth is not evident—does not compel our assent—it is, as the theologians express it, *credibile et credendum*. We may believe it or not, as we choose. And in the choice is our trial—which opens a great question.

PYTHIAS. Yes, indeed. But to me the question of questions just now is, shall I catch my train? Good night.

So much must suffice to explain why it seems to me that Christianity, and in particular that form of Christianity which teaches the supernatural most dogmatically and most uncompromisingly, requires

of men nothing which is contrary to reason; requires of them no assent to anything which has been or can be shown to be false, or incredible, or even improbable. Fully to treat of this grave matter would demand a volume, or rather an encyclopædia. All I have pretended to do is to indicate, in the roughest outline, how difficulties, which to many seem fatal to the claims of Christianity, ceased to seem so to one mind, which considered them long and patiently, and certainly with no desire to be deceived; which most certainly was not in the condition described by the author of *Natural Religion*, of wishing "to preserve a justly cherished ideal by denying and repudiating reality." And this has the closest, the most momentous, bearing upon the great question which I am discussing in the present chapter. If Christianity were unreasonable, its claims to the world's future might at once be dismissed. But if, as I very strongly hold, the achievements of the modern mind—whether in the physical sciences, in psychology, in history, in exegetical criticism—have not in the least discredited Christianity, as rightly understood, here is a fact which is a most important factor in determining our judgment as to the religious prospect of mankind.

We may take it, as I have said before, that two rival systems are before the world, Christianity and Naturalism: the one offering a solution of the enigma of human life, a revelation of the great

Cause which is behind phenomena, incomplete and undemonstrated,[1] but irrefutable; the other denying that we can know anything beyond phenomena, if, indeed, there is anything to be known, and shutting up in physical necessity. Which of the two systems is the world likely to accept? It does not seem rash to answer, the one which most nearly corresponds with the facts of human nature and of human life. Which, then, of the two best corresponds with those facts?

The two great facts of human nature, as it appears to me, are the sense of the Absolute and the sense of sin, both depending upon that faculty which we call conscience: the sense of "a Being to whom we owe our life, and in whom all that deserves the name of life must find its nourishment," and of "something wicked and inexplicable which separates us from that Being."[2] The experience of our race from the earliest dawn of history seems to warrant this assertion. The individual instances which may be adduced where these spiritual senses are apparently wanting no more disprove their existence in man than isolated cases of cecity or surdity disprove his possession of the

[1] I mean, of which the evidence, properly so called, if taken by itself, is not formally complete, and so falls short of demonstration in the sense in which the word is ordinarily used.

[2] I need hardly say that I am quoting from Goethe's *Confession of a Fair Saint.*

physical senses of sight and hearing. It may be safely asserted that those who are—

> Unfettered by the sense of crime,
> To whom a conscience never wakes,

are not so numerous as the blind and the deaf. In the inner ears of men ever resounds that categorical imperative of duty, that stern "Thou oughtest," which speaks at once of a perfect law and a perfect Lawgiver, and of a law broken and a Lawgiver outraged. What does Naturalism make of the sense of the Absolute, of the sense of sin? The best explanation it has to offer is that the one is a gigantic shadow thrown by humanity; that the other is a mere superstition, for that men are naturally good. Will such an explanation suffice as a response to our two deepest instincts? Does it harmonize with the facts? Is it not rather in palpable contradiction to them? But Christianity recognises the facts. When St. Paul speaks of the higher law, to which he consents that it is good, and of the other law warring in his members, and enslaving him, he tells us what the individual experience of almost every man confirms. It is upon these two facts that every religion rests; the feeling that we are born under two laws, the law of virtue and the law of sin, the sentiment of the Infinite and of our need of help from it. "Infelix ego homo, quis me liberabit?"—"Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?" It is the very voice of human nature which breathes in this cry of the Apostle. And

the supreme warrant of Christianity is, that, of all religions, it gives the best, the fullest, the most perfect answer: "Gratia Dei per Jesum Christum' —"The Grace of God by Jesus Christ." Hence it is that Goethe's clear eyes recognised in this religion "a height to which mankind was fitted to attain;" "a goal from which, once attained, mankind can never retrograde:"[1]—a striking testimony, given, as it is, in spite of himself, by the Great Pagan of the century, as Heine has called him.

And as Christianity possesses the great advantage of corresponding with those aspirations of human nature which Naturalism is quite unable to satisfy, so assuredly does it correspond better than Naturalism with the facts of life. Brought into the world, as we are, without our consent—the accident of an accident—hurried from it by irresistible force into the great darkness, subject throughout it to the law of mutability and suffering, consider what human existence is, even for the handful for whom, as the familiar dictum says with terrible truth, ever becoming more true, the race of man lives.[2] And then consider it, as it is, for the masses. I need not dwell upon a theme worn so threadbare. This is certain, that "none would live past years again," would retrace his career just as it has been. Certain it is that all men fear death more than they desire life; and that, apart from supernatural motives,

[1] *Wilhelm Meister's Travels*, c. x.

[2] "Paucis humanum vivit genus."

with which I am not, for the moment, concerned, it is only the illusion of hope—we know too well that it is an illusion, when we accurately survey it—that reconciles us to drag out the remainder of our appointed time. The last word of the highest philosophy of ancient Greece and Rome was resignation; to trample under foot all dreads and inexorable fate and the din of greedy Acheron. The cardinal doctrine of the noblest of non-Christian religions is to know the utter vanity and illusiveness of human existence, and to root out desire. Christianity recognizes the facts of life as frankly and as fully as Stoicism or even Buddhism,—"mundus totus in maligno positus est," is its stern account,—but it transmutes them by a divine alchemy of which neither Stoicism nor Buddhism knew. In proposing the Cross of Jesus Christ as the measure of the world it offers the highest and noblest solution of the great enigma which the world has ever received. If any one wants to realize fully what I mean, let him read the chapter in the *Imitation* on the *Royal Way of the Holy Cross;* or, if that is too great a task, let him turn to the Sermon on the Mount, with its blessings on those who mourn, and are poor, and hunger, and thirst, and are persecuted. To love suffering, to rejoice in it as the means most safely conducting to the supreme end of man, as the divinely appointed instrument of his perfection, to make of the ills of life links that bind the soul to God—this is the distinctive lesson of Christianity.

When Adolphe Monod lay for months in the agonies amid which his beautiful life was to find its earthly close, he would say from time to time to the friends who surrounded his bed, with an accent in which the interior peace and joy of his soul breathed forth, "Cette vie crucifiée est la vie bienheureuse." Suffering is the law of the world, and Christianity is the religion of suffering, the "worship of sorrow." Its fundamental precept, the very condition of the discipleship of Christ, is to deny oneself, and to take up the Cross. Its highest counsels—given not to the multitude, but to elect souls who would be perfect—are the voluntary surrender of all that flesh and blood holds dearest; wealth, the love of women, one's own will. To those who cannot receive these severe and lofty lessons it comes with a doctrine as to the ills of life and as to death itself —the inevitable tragedy with which life closes— that supplies the most potent motive for reconciling us to the conditions of human existence. It comes to man in all his meanness and littleness, and reveals to him his true greatness. It comes to him—

> oppressed by sense
> Of instability, revolt, decay,
> And change, and emptiness—

in a world of which the fashion passeth away, and sets before him the true life of his life, an immortal

hope. It comes to him as he realizes the great truth that "human life is insufficient to satisfy human aspirations," [1] and proposes to him a perfect ideal, in the Word made Flesh, supplying an indefectible standard of right action, and an adequate motive to it, drawing the hearts of men, "in funiculis Adam, in vinculis charitatis," "with cords of a man, with bands of love," calling forth in them those "strange yearnings" which no abstraction, no didactic moralizing, will ever arouse.

Surely I do not exaggerate. The experience of eighteen centuries, the experience of millions in this age of ours, of all nations, kindreds, and tongues, of all sorts and conditions, is my warrant for what I have said, and for far more which the time would fail me to speak of. The religion of Jesus Christ has done, and is doing, all this and much more to make men accept the conditions of human life and to find their blessedness in so doing. Can Naturalism do as much? Can the work of the world be done, the burden of life sustained, upon it? Is not Pascal's saying abundantly verified, that "Nature offers nothing but matter of doubt and disquietude"? Can physical science—claiming to be the only science—supply ethical sanctions? If matter be the sole reality, and physical and mathematical laws rule everything, and men are mere automata, the only power left in the world is brute force.

[1] Mill's *Three Essays on Religion*, p. 104.

The sense of obligation is of the very essence of morality: good and bad, in the last resort, mean not conformity or nonconformity with our own petty interests, personal or social, but conformity or nonconformity with a law above us and divine. Efface from man's mind the belief in that law, shut off from him the ideas of God, eternity, free will, of "justice, chastity, and judgment to come," and what remains of him is a mere animal, "more subtle than any beast of the field," but likewise "cursed above any beast of the field," and as incapable of political liberty. Christianity is an unique pledge of civil freedom because it is an incomparable instrument of morality. But at the touch of Materialism, as Luthardt has said with equal pungency and truth, "morality ceases to exist; ethics are converted into a bill of fare." Alas for the masses, born to toil and suffer, if they are to live and die on this Gospel, the last word of which, in practice, is wealth, physical comfort, self; a Gospel sad enough in any age of the world, saddest in this when the most notable result of our much-vaunted progress is to make life softer for the few but ever harder for the many, to reduce the workman to a mere machine—there is a world of meaning in the term "hand," so often applied to designate him—wearing out his life to produce luxuries which he may not share, in those grim temples of industrialism—

> where is offered up
> To Gain, the master idol of this realm,
> Perpetual sacrifice.

An accomplished contemporary writer has spoken with reason of the "complacent religiosity of the prosperous," as an "execrable emotion." More execrable still is the full-fed optimism of the materialist—

> An eye well practised in nature, a spirit bounded and poor—

discoursing to the pale mechanic of the glorie of "a scientific creed" which takes from him every motive for contentment in life or hope in death; which kills for him the one ideal that can sweeten and redeem his existence of dull monotonous toil. Rough the outer world will always be for him. What matter if, by one effectual fervent prayer, he may pass from the beggarly elements of physical phenomena to the great First Cause—*Causa Causarum;* if by one act of faith, hope, or charity he may in a moment transport himself beyond the veil, where the spirits of the just made perfect, and Jesus, the Mediator of the new Covenant, are his companions; a true Garden of Eden, where after his dreary day is done he may walk with God in the cool of the evening? Naturalism drives him out from that Paradise, and shuts against him the ὁδὸς ἄνω, as Plato calls it, that upward path which leads to God. And the one thing which remains for him to render life endurable is to drown in his Sunday's

body, the senses and the mind,[1] that passes onward into another body."

DAMON. It is a good statement of the great problem; and we may safely agree with Nachiketas when he goes on to say that this is a matter that we must know if we would know the highest end of man.

PYTHIAS. You observe that he also declares that it is "a matter beyond human observation and human reasoning," that it is "a very subtle matter," and that "there is no other teacher to be found like Death."

DAMON. It is curious how modern all this sounds. But, as a matter of fact, are human observation and human reasoning inadequate to prove that man is not wholly of the material order—that he has a self over which the death of the body has no power? I do not think they are inadequate.

PYTHIAS. I should like to hear your argument on this topic. For myself, I frankly own I think the materialists have a strong case. They keep to the facts. They find that life can be traced to a certain collocation of matter. They find that another collocation of matter extinguishes it. The existence of the soul is merely an hypothesis. It may be true. I don't see how it can be proved.

DAMON. Do not let us go too fast. You may

[1] *Manas*, commonly, but not very satisfactorily, translated by "mind"—with which it is etymologically akin—is, in Indian philosophy, the receptive and discriminating faculty; it is part of the bodily organism and is quite distinct from the soul.

call the existence of the soul an hypothesis, if you please; but you may with equal justice call the existence of matter an hypothesis. I mean matter in itself—matter as an objective fact, apart from mind. What, indeed, is matter but the name we give to an unknown force of which the manifestations may be reduced to resistance, or, perhaps I should rather say, *inertia*, under conditions of time and space? Do we really know anything more than that about matter, in the last resort? I do not think we can say that we do. But we know more than that about spirit. We know of external phenomena through the mind. Our knowledge of mental states and processes is direct. True it is that all real knowledge supposes a prior sensation. Still, what is sensation? Coleridge described it as "vision nascent; not the cause of intelligence, but intelligence itself, revealed as an earlier power in the process of self-construction"; and the description seems just.

PYTHIAS. Of course, matter cannot be known without a mind to know it—whatever mind may be—nor can we pretend that we know it as it is in itself, or that we know anything about it except its qualities. But pray go on, for the subject is to me of most pressing interest.

DAMON. I do not know that I shall say anything new. All I can profess to do is to put before you what commends itself to my own mind as indubitably true. Let us, then, consider man as we

know of him, or rather—for in this department no less than in our own profession the maxim holds, *Dolus latet in generalibus*—let us avoid abstractions, and let me speak of the one man whom I know best—myself. What am I then? Well, the first fact about me is the consciousness of my own separate existence. I know that I am I—that under my hat exists a being who is not you, nor any one else; who lives alone, and who dies alone; and who from his first breath to his last is the same man. My personal unchanging identity, I say, is the first fact about me.

PYTHIAS. I do not see how that fact can be denied, however it may be explained.

DAMON. What, then, is this personal unchanging self of which I am conscious? Is it anything belonging to the material order? One of the most definitive gains of modern physical science, as of course I need not tell you, is the establishment of the constant flux of all matter. This isolation from the rest of the universe, of which I am conscious as being the first fact about me cannot be referred to my physical organism, for every particle of that organism is incessantly changing and entering other organisms, animal and vegetable. Physically considered, we have nothing of our own. What is really ours, what constitutes our true self, is the thinking being. The phenomenal part of me has changed over and over again. I remain. It is now changing, and in a short time will have

completely changed. I shall still be the same I. *Ego, ego, animus.*

PYTHIAS. It is a strong point, this unbroken consciousness of personal identity amid the constant mutation of the atoms which make up our physical organism. I do not know that it has been satisfactorily met by the materialists – as yet. Büchner, indeed, observes that, though the substances which make up the brain change, the mode of their composition must be permanent and determinative of the mode of individual consciousness. He adds that these interior processes are inexplicable and inconceivable.

DAMON. There at all events we may safely agree with him.

PYTHIAS. But before you go on, let me point out that the argument which you have just urged applies equally to the brutes. Look at my dog Spider, as he lies there on the hearthrug. All the atoms of which his bodily frame is made up are in a constant state of flux, just as those atoms are which make up my body. Materially, he is not the same dog that he was a very short time ago, but an entirely different dog. His personal identity, however, remains the same, and he is very conscious of it. He knows that he is Spider, not Leo his friend, nor Hector his foe; and he knows that he is the same Spider that he always has been. What is really he, what constitutes his true self, is, I suppose, not his nerves, nor his tissues, nor his

bones, nor his tail, but the thinking being which resides within these environments.

DAMON. And why not? It seems to me manifest that in every living organism, be it animal or vegetable, you must distinguish, as the old schoolmen did, between phenomena and substance. What we call life, wherever we find it, is, as I account, the result of the union of spirit and matter—of the *animæ et corporis dulce consortium*—the sweet wedlock of soul and body. Descartes' machine theory of the animals we call lower is certainly no longer tenable in the face of what we now know about them.

PYTHIAS. So that we may talk of a thinking self in dogs, horses, and cats; so that Sir Joseph Banks, upon the memorable occasion when, if Peter Pindar is to be trusted, he exclaimed,—

> Fleas are not lobsters, damn their souls,

was not exactly *bombinans in vacuo:* and a poet of a different order is to be taken literally when he sings of "a spirit in the woods."

DAMON. There is a profound saying of Thoreau, to whom so many of nature's open secrets were revealed: "The mystery of the life of plants is kindred with that of our own lives. We must not expect to probe with our fingers the sanctuary of any life, whether animal or vegetable." I am persuaded that the true self of every animate being is spiritual. I do not, of course, say that all souls are the same, or that human souls have not endowments

which animal and vegetative souls do not possess. But, my very dear friend, Peter Pindar's scurrility won't help us much in a discussion of this kind.

PYTHIAS. Believe me, I have never been more serious than I am at the present moment. "Truth sits upon the lips of dying men." But you know my cast of mind has always been somewhat Voltairian, and I can't change it now. If, as I strongly incline to think, Swift was right in holding life to be a ridiculous tragedy, perhaps our highest wisdom is to look as much as we can upon the risible side of it. But don't let us digress. You have doubtless considered the fact that mental processes depend upon the bodily organs. You cannot think without a brain. And not only so, it has been clearly established that certain sets of conceptions and impressions depend so absolutely upon certain portions of the brain, that, if those portions be removed, the impressions and conceptions disappear with them. Phrenology has doubtless been discredited by charlatans. But Gall was unquestionably right in his main position, that the various parts of the brain are the seats of different intellectual faculties. Büchner makes a point when he asks, What more signal proof of the material character of the so-called "soul" can you have than that the anatomist's scalpel is able to take it away, bit by bit? and appeals triumphantly to this fact as putting it beyond question that the intellectual faculties are a product of the cerebral substance.

DAMON. Büchner and his school have a strange way of reasoning. I admit their facts, but deny their inferences. The fact of the close connection between the brain and the thought, and between certain sections of the brain and certain intellectual faculties, is indisputable. But it is a curious kind of logic which pronounces, as a necessary conclusion from these facts, that intellect is a creation of the brain and thought a mere secretion. Why may not the cerebral substance be a product of the mind? No doubt mortal man cannot think without a brain. No doubt the various developments of intelligence and sensibility correspond with developments of the brain. No doubt the removal of a particular portion of the cerebral substance, or grave injury to it, is followed—for a time, at all events—by the cessation of the faculty of which that portion was the organ. So, the musician cannot play without an instrument, nor can he produce certain sounds if the notes whereon he expresses them are wanting or are dumb:—

> But the soul is not the body, and the breath is not the flute;
> Both together make the music; either marred, and all is mute.

No, the soul is not the body. I can give you what seems to me a convincing proof of that from my own recent experience. Not long ago I took laughing-gas, before having a tooth drawn. So complete was the insensibility which it produced that when I came to myself, after the operation was over, I asked the dentist when he was going to begin. On the other hand, my mind, while I was under the

influence of the anæsthetic, was active and lucid in a quite astonishing degree. I seemed to be in a land of marvels, where the deepest mysteries were revealed to me; and, when the effect of the gas passed off, it was as though the veil of illusion had fallen again between me and realities. Swiftly the vision faded, but the general impression remained, indistinct and blurred indeed, for some hours. I suppose this experience is common enough. Sir Humphry Davy, I remember, tells us how, after taking nitrous oxide, he exclaimed to Dr. Kinglake, "with the most intense belief and prophetic earnestness, 'Nothing exists but thought; the universe is composed of impressions, ideas, pleasures, and pains.'"

PYTHIAS. The phenomena of ætherisation are certainly very curious, and I wonder that they have not been made more of by your side.

DAMON. There are many kindred phenomena not less curious, and not of less evidential value as to the spiritual element in the nature of man. Consider how in sleep we sometimes transcend our individual limits and project ourselves into futurity. Consider the marvels of second sight, of mesmerism, of clairvoyance, of spiritualism. Nothing, of course, is easier than to put aside the accounts of these things contemptuously, and to pronounce dogmatically that they are either delusions or impostures, and cannot be true. But nothing is more unscientific. Make the largest deductions you

reasonably may for error and fraud, and there remains a vast body of quite irrefragable facts—facts which testify to the incorporeal nature, the independent action, and the distinct personality of the soul.

PYTHIAS. It is not very amusing lying here day after day. Still, I should like a little longer term of life than the doctors give me to see whether anything will come of the psychical research which is being pursued so vigorously just now. You remember Balzac's novel, in which the Voltairian doctor is converted to Catholicism by the wonders of mesmerism.

DAMON. Yes. I think Balzac never wrote anything finer than those pages of Ursule Mirouët; but surely, without going to mesmerism, good old Doctor Minoret might have recognised the existence of psychical states in which the laws of the material universe are transcended. The man must have lived to little purpose who has not experienced the truth of the old proverb, *Cor ad cor loquitur.* Is it not a common experience enough for soul to communicate with soul without the intermediary of the external senses? Love, friendship, sympathy, do they not often prove their independence of articulate speech, of formulated ideas? Nay, more, have we not all something divinatory—*μαντευμά τι*—within our own breasts, whereby, in Goethe's happy phrase, in particular cases we can put out the feelers of our soul beyond its bodily limits, and obtain a presentiment of, nay an actual

insight into, the immediate future? And is not all this quite irreconcilable with the materialistic theory of man?

PYTHIAS. "Materialistic theory" is a vague term. There are many materialistic theories, many degrees of materialism. I suppose we must all agree that since the intellectual revolution wrought by Kant, the materialism of which Cabanis and Condillac spoke the last word is no longer tenable. What we now know about the physiology of the sense organs has been fatal to it. But there is a more subtle theory. Feeling, it has been urged, depends upon the grouping of molecular movements, which physiology is beginning to discover and register: sensation, and with it our whole intellectual existence, may be due to elementary forces, infinite in number and incessantly varying in combination. That is an hypothesis with which the facts could stand well enough, I think. But it would take us long to discuss it. And my time is short. After all it is a mere hypothesis. Still, even if it be evident—which is your point—that what it is the fashion to call "soul" is something more than a simple function of the nervous system, what is the gain? In the name of common sense can we get beyond Voltaire's account that "soul" is a vague indefinite term expressing an unknown principle of effects known and felt by us, which has generally been taken for the origin or cause of life, or for life itself? Be it so, if you like.

But what reason is there for supposing that death is not fatal to it?

DAMON. Reasons in abundance there are, as it seems to me. That the living organism is something more than matter, appears to be abundantly proved by any dead body. Chemically considered, a corpse at the moment after death is, in many cases, exactly what it was at the moment before death. I mean its material constituents are the same. There are the same atoms, the same molecules, the same physico-chemical properties. But motion, sensation, intelligence, have departed from it. Why? Because the force which directed and governed the myriads of molecules that compose it, and whence came its motion, its sensation, its intelligence, has vanished. That force we call life. But if all the material constituents of man remain when life has departed, if no collocation of those material constituents will produce life, is it not plain that life cannot be the product of those material constituents?

PYTHIAS. Well, of course we must all agree with Tyndall, that "it is the compounding, in the organic world of forces, belonging equally to the inorganic, that constitutes the mystery and the miracle of vitality." But what is your drift?

DAMON. I say it is a mystery which the scalpel of the anatomist will never lay bare, a miracle which no processes of the laboratory will ever

reduce to the merely physical order. What seems to me certain is that the force which we call life is not the result of any combination of physical atoms, that there is no correlation, in any true sense, between it and any of the forces which we commonly call inorganic. Hence I think I speak the words of truth and soberness if I say that its origin is spiritual. No conclusion, I submit, is so reasonable in view of the facts of physical science as this: that the life of the body depends upon an immaterial something that vivifies the material frame—a something which we call the soul; that it is a force which is the result of their union.

PYTHIAS. And what of death?

DAMON. Death is not a state but an act. It is the dissolution of the union of soul and body, and the extinction of that physical life which came from that union. It is the destruction of nothing, for nothing in the universe perishes. As every schoolboy knows, the material elements of the body undergo after death a process of slow combustion, which we call decomposition, whereby they are transformed. And if this is so, we may securely conclude that the more excellent part of man does not perish. True and beautiful are those words of Michelet: "Pas une pièce et pas un atome du corps dont fut vêtue mon âme n'est perdu, tu le sais. Des éléments qui le constituèrent chacun va trouver son semblable, retourne à ses affinités. Combien plus l'âme elle-même, la puissance harmonique qui

fit l'unité de ce corps, doit durer et survivre! Elle survit, mais une. Car l'unité, c'est sa nature."

PYTHIAS. It is beautiful—but it is poetry.

DAMON. And is it, therefore, the less true? We have been discussing this great question hitherto mainly from the point of view of physical science. But, as you well know, I am far from admitting that physical science is the only instrument of knowledge, or that its methods are the only way of arriving at truth. It seems to me that the old philosophers, both of India and of Greece, have been abundantly justified by modern thought in insisting that the intellect is more trustworthy than the senses, as being conversant with the realities that underlie the objects of sense.

PYTHIAS. Are we to leave facts for words? Can any good come of logomachy?

DAMON. I am far from wishing to leave facts for words. I only ask you to look at all the facts. That intuition which I possess of myself, and for which I do not depend upon sense, is it not a fact, and, as I said just now, the first of facts? Is there not an essential difference between physical facts and spiritual? Volition, the ethical sense, the sense of beauty, the sense of infinitude, is it possible without absurdity to refer these faculties to the material order? Surely we may say with old Montaigne, "Quelles bêtes ce sont que vertu et justice!"

PYTHIAS. Does your argument, in strictness, amount to more than this: that because the body is

visible and because the effects of corporeal functions are cognisable by the senses, it cannot possess functions and produce effects which are known to us by a direct and internal perception? But why not? It is a question of fact.

DAMON. Well, my very dear friend, I will only say, what I feel with an intensity of conviction which no words can express, that the superstitions of materialism appear to me to be an infinitely worse outrage to the human reason than the superstitions of the lowest kinds of fetishism. If a man will believe that sensation can produce ideas independent of matter, of time, and of place, he will believe anything. The testimony of consciousness as to the distinction between soul and body—closely united as they are—seems to me conclusive. I think Goethe was well warranted when he said to Eckermann, "Man has a right to believe in the existence and immortality of the soul, and such a belief is agreeable to his nature, whereas the contrary belief is not." And I say, further, with him, "To me the eternal existence of the soul is clear from its activity. If I work incessantly until my death, I have a sort of guarantee from nature of another form of existence, when the present can no longer supply a field for the energies of my spirit."

PYTHIAS. I don't think that argument helps you much. I do not deny that it has a certain amount of weight in Goethe's mouth. There is something in us, I confess, which gives a negative reply to the

question, Ergo Quinctilium perpetuus sopor urget? The feeling that the greatness, the beauty, the wealth of thought which we have known in the choice specimens of humanity, cannot be quenched in the dust, leads man to—

> . . . . build himself, he knows not what
> Of second life, he knows not where.

This is natural enough when we think of a Quinctilius, a Goethe. But the argument may be reversed with terrible effect. Just consider what the vast majority of our race are and ever have been since the dawn of history, not to go back to the cave men, the river-drift men, and our other far-off ancestors; and is not the personal immortality of all these myriads of bestial and barbaric beings incredible?

DAMON. It is an *argumentum ad vertiginem*. The mind reels at the vision you conjure up. But after all you are simply painting a fancy picture upon the unsubstantial canvass of our infinite ignorance. What do we know of the conditions of extra physical existence? We cannot judge the invisible that has passed beyond us, by the visible that is left behind. A valued friend, in talking with me of this matter, a short time ago, made some striking observations which may well serve, I think, as a gloss upon that thought of Goethe. "There must be progress from life to life. It cannot be that life should either rise out of death or finally return thither. From nothing we

can get nothing; we cannot get to life and thought from that which simply is not. But if the beginning and the root of things is life, then the cyclic return of existence to that beginning must mean an increased power and depth of existence. To say that existence is a circle traced in air, a wheel turning idly upon itself, and doing nought but turn, a thing self-born and self-devouring, a painted nothing that appears and vanishes again, is all one with denying the primal intuition of reason, whereby we know the difference between *is* and *is not*." Such, as I should gather from his various utterances upon this matter, was pretty much the way in which it presented itself to Goethe's mind. His luminous calm seems to me to have been undisturbed by the confirmed suspiciousness of temper—born of the phenomena that come and go and deceive us with a vain promise of stability—to which we lesser men owe the perturbations that cloud for our mind this question of an after-life. To his undimmed vision the truth lay revealed that phenomena cannot be all; that we ourselves abide under all changes; that life is not a painted nothing, but "a painted veil," hiding the everlasting reality whose presence is proved by its unending works.

PYTHIAS. "Good sentences and well pronounced." It is possible that Goethe would have accepted your gloss. But I should like to know what your orthodox friends would make of it. I should be inclined to say that what has done most "to cloud for our

minds this question of an after-life" is the mass of absurdities propounded by Christianity about it. If the Christian religion is not to fall extinct, its teaching about life and death must be transformed or resumed, as Hegel would say, in a rational synthesis; its creed must develope, and that as quickly as possible, into the creed of science.

DAMON.

ὦ Γῆ τοῦ φθέγματος, ὡς ἱερὸν καὶ σεμνὸν καὶ τερατῶδες.

Our old lamps have served pretty well for a good many centuries to light the foremost races of mankind through the world's darkness, and they still seem to be burning pretty brightly. Before giving them up for new ones, we should like to be sure that we should gain by the exchange.

PYTHIAS. I think you will find that they will want a good deal of adaptation if they are to suit modern needs. Look the facts in the face, my dear fellow. Is not the Christian account of life and death briefly this: that the Creator and Governor of the infinite universe is, to borrow Tyndall's pungent description, a manufacturer of souls, turning out annually for England and Wales some quarter of a million—bad specimens enough, most of them—for the human accidents of accidents, begotten, or misbegotten, in that portion of her Majesty's dominions; that these immortal creatures are [illegible]ly created with the full knowledge of their Creator that few of them will come within measurable distance of the religious and moral standard

which he prescribes to them; that after their brief life in this world these souls all appear before the Supreme Judge, the vast majority—as of course He had foreknown—to be condemned to everlasting torments, a few to enter heaven, and some, as Catholics hold, to undergo a greater or less purification in purgatorial fire, until they are sufficiently cleansed for the abode of bliss; that at the end of the world the bodies in which these souls dwelt will be reconstituted—although their constituent atoms have gone through countless changes—and will be reunited to them to share their eternal destiny. I put it to your candour: Is this theory of life and death tenable by any intelligent man who will not make his reason blind and who really thinks about it?

DAMON. I will answer you, point by point, and, be assured, with entire candour; and in order to be accurate I will be guided in my answer by the teaching of Catholicity, as being the most precise and dogmatic of all the varieties of Christianity. First, as to the origin of the soul. No doubt many considerable authorities have held, and still hold, that when a man chances to beget a child a soul is immediately created to animate it. But this Creationist doctrine is not of faith. The Traducian view—that the soul, like the body, is derived from the parent—has been held by theologians of much repute, and, although fallen into discredit, has never been condemned.* Or if you elect to say, with St.

Augustine, I do not like to dogmatise about a matter of which I know nothing—Je ne suis pas dans les secrets du bon Dieu—you would be quite at liberty as a Catholic Christian to do so.

PYTHIAS. Le *bon* Dieu! The adjective is somewhat inappropriate in this connection. Anyhow, you hold the soul to be directly or indirectly from God—

> What out of senseless Nothing to provoke
> A conscious Something to resent the yoke
> Of unpermitted Pleasure, under pain
> Of everlasting penalties, if broke?

And with the knowledge that those penalties would be incurred? How is it possible that a Being at once All Good and Omniscient could freely create any soul before which lay an eternity of ineffable misery? It is a question, at which we glanced, as I dare say you will remember, some months ago.[1] Have you any further light upon it?

DAMON. No. All the answers that have been given to that question seem to me to be the idlest verbiage. Nay, more, I do not profess to explain how a tear in a baby's eye or the sufferings of a crushed worm are to be reconciled with the perfect goodness of the Omnipotent. I freely grant that the constitution of the world, if we had nothing else to guide us, would lead to the conclusion that it is the work of an incomplete or a restricted goodness.

[1] See pp. 255-262.

PYTHIAS. You remember the account given by a certain French actress of the terms in which she was wont to express herself, "quand il m'arrive de prier Dieu":—"O mon Dieu! si toutefois vous existez, écoutez-moi, si toutefois vous pouvez m'entendre, et ayez la suprême bonté, si toutefois vous êtes bon, de m'accorder la petite faveur que je vous demande, si vraiment vous pouvez faire tout ce que vous voulez."

DAMON. Well, if we rest merely in the phenomenal world I do not think we can get much beyond that devotional formula. But it is the sure conclusion of reason that the Omnipotent is God because He is the highest, the perfect Good. And here religious faith comes in: "Etiamsi occiderit me, in Ipso sperabo." It is the old mystery of the existence of evil. Why waste words upon a matter which is hopelessly insoluble? I say, as Kant expresses it, that "Supreme wisdom deals with intelligent beings according to a principle of free will, and in the adminstration of His empire allows their good and evil to emanate from and to be imputed to themselves."

PYTHIAS. The old metaphysical juggle. Pardon me; I cannot call it anything else.

DAMON. A primary fact of human nature, however inexplicable, and the indispensable basis of human society.

> Our wills are ours, we know not how;
> Our wills are ours to make them Thine.

PYTHIAS. I know, I know. But an argument on this matter would take us far and bring us—nowhere.

DAMON. The ultimate appeal is to the Supreme Court of Consciousness. Does any man really think that he is an automaton? The voice of human nature spoke by Dr. Johnson: "But, sir, as to the doctrine of necessity, no man believes in it. If a man should give me arguments that I do not see, though I could not answer them, should I believe that I do not see?"

PYTHIAS. Well, let us go on to the last articles of that cheerful document, the *Creed of St. Athanasius*: "At whose coming all men shall rise again with their own bodies and shall give account for their own works. And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting, and they that have done evil into everlasting fire."

DAMON. As to the resurrection of the body, Catholics, of course, hold that doctrine of the creed, but are by no means committed to any specific explanation of it. There is, indeed, a very weighty school of contemporary Protestant theologians—Ulrici is their ablest spokesman—who hold that it is natural, and implies only the persistence of the "form," not of the material, of the force which is inherent in a seed or a cell, not of what has been drawn from the environment and yielded up at death—not of the outward nerves and tissues in which it was sheathed. They affirm that we

have good grounds for believing in the existence of a non-atomic enswathement of the soul, ethereal, intangible, invisible, which at death departs with it from the muddy vesture of decay and constitutes the resurrection body. This is the *linga*, "the subtle body," of Kapila and the Sânkhya school; and I am by no means satisfied that it is not pretty much what Spinoza meant by his "essentia corporis," which he affirmed to pertain to the essence of the mind, and to be necessarily eternal. Next, as to everlasting life. There, it seems to me, you get your ideas from Frederick Harrison and his "eternity of the tabor," or from Lord Byron's account of George III. inside the gates of Paradise: "I left him practising the Hundredth Psalm." You would do better to go for your theology to theologians. Bourdaloue's description of the happiness of the blessed in the Beatific Vision is: "Ils possèdent Dieu, et dans Dieu ils trouvent le repos le plus parfait et l'assemblage de tous les biens, puisque Dieu est leur fin dernière et que chaque être, parvenu à sa fin, s'y repose comme dans son centre." Lastly, concerning those who fail of their final end and are lost—that is a subject which, you know, we have already considered,[1] in the light of the terrible analogy from the inexorableness of physical law, and the no less terrible consensus of every great religion, every profound thinker, as to the tremendous, the far-reaching nature of moral

[1] See pp. 263-266.

evil. I do not know that there is much more to be said regarding it, except perhaps, what Cardinal Newman has said in the *Grammar of Assent*. Let me take down the book from your shelves and read you a few sentences of it: "As to those various religions which, together with Christianity, teach the doctrine of eternal punishment, here again we ought, before we judge, to understand, not only the whole state of the case, but what is meant by the doctrine itself. Eternity, or endlessness, is in itself only a negative idea, though punishment is positive. Its fearful force, as added to punishment, lies in what it is not; it means no change of state, no annihilation, no restoration. But it cannot become a quality of punishment any more than a man's living seventy years is a quality of his mind, or enters into the idea of his virtues or talents. If punishment be attended by continuity, by a sense of duration and succession, by the mental presence of its past and its future, by a sustained power of realising it, this must be because it is endless and something more; such inflictions are an addition to its endlessness, and do not necessarily belong to it because it is endless. As I have already said, the great mystery is not that evil has no end, but that it had a beginning."

PYTHIAS. It is a striking passage, and I suspect that "more is meant than meets the ear" in these words of his most eloquent Eminence. I am quite sure that neither you nor he, however you may

impose upon yourselves, believe in your heart of hearts a dogma which, gloss it over as you will, "ascribes to God the attributes of a malignant fiend." "If God could have dispensed with hell and did not, then He is not benevolent; if He would have dispensed with hell and could not, then He is not omnipotent." That is a dilemma from which there is no escape.

DAMON. Yes, there is this way out of it, or round it—if you like—that we are not yet in a position to frame a scientific theodicy; that we cannot do so for the simple reason that the attempt involves what Butler calls "the infinitely absurd supposition that we know the whole of the case." Your favourite Omar Khayyám has a quatrain very much to the purpose:—

> A hair, perhaps, divides the False and True,
> Yes: and a single Alif were the clue—
> Could you but find it—to the Treasure-house,
> And peradventure to THE MASTER too.

PYTHIAS. "Could you but find it!" Yes, indeed.

DAMON. Meanwhile you are quite right in believing that neither Cardinal Newman nor I ascribe to God the attributes of a malignant fiend.

PYTHIAS. Some good Christians certainly do. I was talking the other day to a very learned and accomplished Catholic ecclesiastic, who told me that he had been called in to give the last sacraments to a poor Irishman. He found his penitent with some freethinking friend who was arguing

that there was no hell. The dying Celt raised himself up with much indignation. "No hell!" he exclaimed; "then where is the poor man's consolation?"

DAMON. A people's religion is, and ever must be, a corrupt religion. *Quidquid recipitur secundum modum recipientis recipitur.* It is the commonest mistake in the present day for men to identify Christian teaching with some vulgar caricature of it and then to condemn it offhand without in the least understanding what it really is. It fills one with pity to see earnest and able men thus wasting time and energy in arguing, as the old Greeks would have said, about the shadow of an ass. Then, again, remember that to take any one doctrine of a body of scientific theology, such as the Catholic creed is, separately and to the exclusion of the rest, is to caricature the whole of it. Moreover, Christian teaching professes to be symbolic, and an economy of divine things. Every article of faith must be construed according to the sense of Goethe's line, "Alles vergängliche ist nur ein Gleichniss." Surely there is some middle term between knowing exactly how things are in themselves and knowing nothing at all about them. Are not painting, poetry, and music economical in their representation of reality? Is not speech itself a most mysterious yet a true analogon of thought? But you are looking at the clock. I fatigue you.

PYTHIAS. No, not at all. But it is getting near

the time for my doctor's daily visit. He won't, however, be here for another quarter of an hour, and there is just one more topic upon which I should like to hear you. You have doubtless considered how far your view of life and death can be reconciled with the doctrine of progressive evolution, that the more perfect comes from the less perfect, and the conscious from the unconscious—a doctrine which I believe you no more doubt than I do.

DAMON. It is a large subject to deal with in so short a time. We shall get on best by being as precise and scientific as possible. Nay, you must pardon me if I am a trifle didactic. In regard to evolution, then, I would distinguish three things: the nature, the environment, and the resultant. By the nature I mean the active power from which we start; by the environment all other powers that act upon it, or upon which it acts; by the resultant, the species at which we finally arrive.

PYTHIAS. All this has a very scholastic sound.

DAMON. I submit that it is none the worse for that. I go on to lay it down as an axiom that all change, including, therefore, development, or change to a higher condition of activity, must be subject to the law of causation, and that whatever passes from potentiality to act is moved by a sufficient cause. Hence I deny that not-mind can ever result in mind, or not-life in life. I deny that any number of transformations produced by any number of en-

vironments can raise it to a state of consciousness or enable it to become an *Ego.*

PYTHIAS. As a matter of fact spontaneous generation, as we all confess, has never, in any circumstances known to us, been witnessed. Still you are aware that weighty authorities strongly incline to believe it: Herbert Spencer goes so far as to say that, were not man's origin implicated, "we should accept without a murmur the derivation of animal and vegetable life from what we call inorganic matter."

DAMON. I think the evidence clearly points that way; and if the fact were established, as I incline to think it will be, sooner or later, I for one should be very far from murmuring about it. If matter, or extended substance, endowed with no other qualities than those of resistance—energy, kinetic or potential, transformable into chemical, thermodynamical, electric or magnetic action—has become living in course of evolution, it is not the base thing which it appears to be in the philosophy of Condillac, Cabanis, and the French medico-atheistic school. No; that would be a violation of the axiomatic law of causation which I just now stated. Some hitherto latent energy *sui generis*, and distinct in nature as in manifestation from material energy, must have come into play; and the mysterious thing which we term matter is what Bain has called it, "a double-faced somewhat, having a spiritual and physical side," a compound of two

natures, the lower manifesting itself earlier than the higher, as is natural.

PYTHIAS. This seems to approximate to Spinoza's doctrine, "Omnia, diversis tamen gradibus, animata sunt"—that soul and body are one and the same thing considered now under the attribute of thought and now under the attribute of extension. But the question arises at this stage of your argument, Can the same substance, being absolutely identical with itself or simple, manifest two distinct or opposed kinds of activity such as those of life and matter? I fancy your orthodox friends would say, No. Would they not be down upon you with the syllogism, "Whatever is extended in space is measurable and divisible; but the conscious *Ego* is neither measurable nor divisible. Therefore it is not extended in space.

DAMON. No doubt a school for which I have the greatest respect would so reason. I would reply that perhaps the major of this argument needs to be distinguished. Space is measurable and divisible. But the energy acting in it, is that not also measurable and divisible? A spirit—certainly the Infinite Spirit—might put forth an energy of resistance within a given circumference, and in that case clearly you might measure the force exerted on every square inch, although it would be due to an indivisible energy—to the spirit in which there is no real division, but only the power of producing effects that are divisible and divided. Now, if this is so, we may refer all the phenomena of matter to

simple energies producing resistance in space, and these energies may reasonably be conceived of as possessing other powers than those of resistance—that is to say, as living. And then what we term matter would be only the resultant of the relations of a finite spiritual energy to space, and body would be merely the spatial relations of a spirit.

PYTHIAS. It is a bold speculation.

DAMON. Whatever it may be worth, this is certain: that all spiritualistic philosophers insist that a pure spirit is capable of exerting force; and what is that but to allow that a spirit can put on material attributes? What, then, if the universe cognisable by the senses were only the manifestation of spiritual being in space?

PYTHIAS. But what is space?

DAMON. I should be much obliged to any one who would tell me, for I do not see my way to any answer altogether satisfactory. A great authority holds that as a notion it is "the three dimensions of body or matter considered in the abstract." And I suppose we may say that as a reality it can only be energy manifesting itself under the three dimensions, and that as an imagination it is the possibility of energy so manifesting itself. But, whatever it is, I think we must allow that the spirit or the thinking substance may exert resistance under these dimensions, and so may appear as matter.

PYTHIAS. Which is Berkeleyism, or something very like it.

DAMON. It approximates to Berkeley's view, I suppose, for of course he did not hold the absurd notion often attributed to him that matter is nothing, but that it is nothing distinct from spiritual energy, or that it is one form—the lowest—of such energy; it has more however in common with the theory of Boscovitch. My conclusion is that from a mere principle of extension you can get neither life nor mind; but that matter may well be a non-extended principle of energy manifesting itself under dimensions.

PYTHIAS. You conceive, then, if I rightly apprehend you, of your non-extended energy as unconscious life, moving on towards consciousness, as a latent *Ego* destined to put forth conscious thought when the conditions of the environment allow of it?

DAMON. Yes. I believe that the old wall of partition between spirit and matter is cracking in all directions: I think I already hear the sound of the trumpets before whose blast it is doomed to fall. But I believe further that we shall come to recognise a thinking substance of which thought is the foundation, not the resultant—a view which, by the way, was practically admitted in the old scholastic system, where the potentiality of so-called matter to put on fresh qualities and to become spiritualised was allowed, although but slightly analysed. It seems to me very possible that created life may at first have been latent in things or have manifested itself only in the lowest energy

—the material; and that, under whatever laws of evolution, one species may have grown out of another, until the instinctive or unconscious life was fully developed in the lower organisms. Again, taking the data of embryology, of infancy, of sickness and mental derangement, I infer that the mind or *Ego* may remain indefinitely unconscious, latent, or undeveloped, according to conditions which are mostly beyond our ken—conditions which, however, so far as we do know them, may be moral as well as material. But though latent, the energy is indestructible; what it requires is a favourable environment.

PYTHIAS. And here, I suppose, comes in the law of evolution.

DAMON. Precisely; the law in virtue of which things advance from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, from the less to the more determinate. This law being universal, it follows that the struggle for existence must ultimately issue in the harmonious distribution of all forces throughout the universe, so that defeat is rather to be called delay, as all things tend more and more to rise in the scale, and no force or principle can ever be really abolished. Combining the struggle with the result we obtain the so-called "law of spiral ascension," or the progress of things by a gradual development of what is latent in them. Forms tend more and more to become stable as acts grow into habits, and whilst the conscious becomes unconscious or auto-

matic, a further height of consciousness is attained, as we may see in the musician, to whom, as Mozart becomes easy, Beethoven becomes intelligible. Thus every attainment is also a prophecy. But, with increase of power, from this potency comes an increased self-consciousness or development of the *Ego*, as a personage, individual, self-balanced, master of its resources, characteristic, *sui generis*, himself.

PYTHIAS. Your thought seems to be pretty much this:

> I who trace Providence without a break
> I' the plan of things, drop plumb on this plain print—
> Of an intention with a view to good,
> That man is made in sympathy with man
> At outset of existence, so to speak;
> But in dissociation, more and more,
> Man from his fellow, as their lives advance
> In culture; still humanity that's born
> A mass, keeps flying off, fining away
> Ever into a multitude of points,
> And ends in isolation, each from each:
> Peerless above in the sky, the pinnacle,—
> Absolute contact, fusion, all below
> At the base of being.

DAMON. I thank you for quoting those fine verses. Yes: Browning is right. That is the ascension of the *Ego*. There is but one real substance, the soul; and evolution, or the history of the world, is only the continued metamorphosis by which the *Ego* comes to know itself. Nature is the allegory of spirit, and as each symbol develops an activity it exhausts a meaning, and, being itself a

means, must disappear. Death is therefore natural and has its proper function, which is to sweep away the used-up material into the fire, where it may be made capable of further use. Matter as distinct from spirit is an abstraction, and, if taken to be real, an illusion, as those old Vedic sages saw: the mocking Mâya, from which thought alone can release. In the universe there is but one aim: to disengage the unconscious and the latent from its state of inertia, of mere potency, and to raise it to individual self-possession. But such self-possession can never be unless by the gradual assimilation of the infinite with the finite—the union of nature with its environment—or of the finite with the infinite, the same union looked at inversely. The result must unite individuals into a species, the multitude of conscious beings into a society, the creation with God. But it cannot abolish consciousness, and therefore in the fixed or everlasting harmony God will know Himself and all will know God, and the infinite in which they communicate will be their bond of union.

PYTHIAS. And the assimilation of finite with infinite is a never-ending process?

DAMON. Yes, so long as it means progress too, and a more and more determinate and individual possession of life by each spirit; not the lapse of all into the unconscious, which would be simply a return, a degradation, or, in Browning's language, a stooping from the pinnacle to the base, and no

fulfilment of a design, but rather the annihilation of a purpose. If, then, all things are to become spiritual, this cannot imply that they will some day sink to be material again. Phenomena are avowedly the means and not the end. Self-conscious spirit alone is the end; nor can we conceive of any higher expression of a really persistent force than that which makes it a consciousness, wherein abide past, present, and future, as known, loved, and acted upon. The final stage of progress, so far as we can discern it, must be a society of immortal beings, physically, morally, and intellectually perfect, united in the immanent Cause of their existence and action, who is revealed to them as such by the changes they have undergone.

PYTHIAS. Tancred's lady has apparently well summed it up: "We had fins; we may have wings." Shall I shock you—or are you past shocking—if I say that the prospect does not much charm me? I agree with Voltaire, "On aime la vie, mais le néant ne laisse pas d'avoir du bon."

DAMON. My dear old friend, just consider that our likings have nothing to do with the matter. "The nature of things will not be changed by your or my fond wishes." "Things are what they are, and their consequences will be what they will be. Why, then, should we desire to be deceived?"

PYTHIAS. That is exactly what I do not desire, nor you either, of course. But I wonder whether

we make sufficient allowance for the difference of our intellectual constitution? Let me hear you out, however, if you will be so kind. There are still two points which you must touch upon before your theory will be properly rounded off—the destiny of matter and the bearing of the problem of evil on the whole doctrine of progress.

DAMON. Physical science indicates that matter proceeds from the invisible and returns thither, developing in the intermediate cycles an ever larger and higher capacity for the expression of vital energies. Thus it is imperceptibly condensed from elements to compounds; from hydrogen, nitrogen, carbon, oxygen, to the living organisms in which spirit manifests itself; and this unstable synthesis dissolves in the partial analysis of vital action and in the total analysis of death. But there are grounds for believing that death controls only the visible, and that there are invisible material energies by which the spirit can act after death. These energies make up the *σῶμα πνευματικόν*, to use St. Paul's phrase, the spiritual body, which may be subject to endless transformations, raising it higher and higher until the spirit attains the vastest powers of acting in and through space. There is no reason why these powers should be suspended, annihilated, or made unnecessary to the soul's perfection; on the contrary, they should, according to the analogy of nature, persist. A soul now embodies itself in flesh and blood. Here-

after it may be the ruling principle of a star. If matter be the outside of spirit, then spiritual beings may be, must be, the centres of cosmic energy, and the material universe may be as lasting as the soul itself. Nay, more, it is reasonable to suppose that the creative or artistic instinct demands this for its contentment, and that immortal knowledge will be the mainspring of ever fresh realisation by the spirit in the world of sense. Yes, there is a true word in Lord Beaconsfield's joke. The wings of immortality are contemplation and action. The soul creates a world around it and embodies a world in the concrete. What reason is there why this should come to an end with death, if death be only the releasing of pent-up energies and not the dissolution of them all?

Then as to evil. It is commonly held that progress must change evil to good, and that it is only relative, only the negation of higher good as yet unattained. But, as I have urged, we must admit freewill upon the supreme testimony of consciousness. I say, therefore, that if a man submits to the law of moral development, which he may do by choosing and acting aright, he will finally be delivered from all evil. But if he rebels and will not submit to the elevating, the redeeming influences, he thereby falls under those which degrade, stupefy, and materialise. And as he would cease to be man had he no free-will—*actu vel potentia*—and moral good must imply moral choice, it seems

inevitable that he should remain the slave of the lower life as long as he will not choose to break away from it. And, death being a change of state, not of moral condition, what warrant have we for affirming that the process of degradation will not continue indefinitely? And science not admitting annihilation—nothing perishes—does not this imply an eternal abiding in that from which the soul was meant to pass onward and upward? By what name, then, shall we call the vision of perfection not realised, nor now to be realised, the consciousness of a life with infinite aspirations unfulfilled, the knowledge of aims endlessly desirable, yet not loved, the thought of action that might have been wide and high as the universe, now expended fruitlessly and thwarted by an evil will? You know the name, which so lightly comes to men's lips, given by all religions to this sphere of darkness. I do not see that science can erase it from the portal. If the soul at last identifies itself with the environment and this with itself, an evil soul must have around it an environment of horror. I admit that all this depends upon the existence of free-will and the reality of sin, concerning which we must interrogate, not the men of physical science, but those to whom good and evil have appeared the supreme realities of life and the struggle between them the supreme struggle for existence. It was a fine saying of Joubert's and a true: "One should be fearful of being wrong in poetry when one

thinks differently from the poets, and in religion when one thinks differently from the saints."

PYTHIAS. There comes my doctor—no saint, but a staunch materialist. He is just in time; for if you go on I shall perhaps have to say of you as Duclos said of some of his friends—in a different connection, indeed—"Ces gens-là finiront par me faire aller à la messe."

DAMON. Would that be a great misfortune? If my own testimony is worth anything, take it in the old lines—

> Plurima quæsivi: per singula quæque cucurri:
> Nec quidquam inveni melius quam credere Christo.

FINIS.

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